

# **Transnational Migration and Group Cohesion in Five Pohnpeian Communities**

**By**

**Charles A. Hubbard**

Submitted to the graduate degree program in Anthropology  
and the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

---

F. Allan Hanson, Chairperson

---

Majid Hannoum

---

Brent E. Metz

---

Lizette Peter

---

Glenn Petersen

Date Defended: May 7, 2018

The Dissertation Committee for Charles A. Hubbard  
certifies that this is the approved version of the following dissertation:

Transnational Migration and Group Cohesion in Five Pohnpeian Communities

---

F. Allan Hanson, Chairperson

Date Approved: May 7, 2018

## Abstract

Long spared direct incursions by the global economy and colonial occupation, residents of the central Micronesian island of Pohnpei have shifted from being members of a regional center of influence to marginal players on the world stage. From the late-1820s through the mid-1980s, successive waves of traders, whalers, missionaries, and colonial occupiers altered the form of Pohnpeian social institutions, economy, and culture. Historically a place which drew people in, seeking its abundant natural resources, Pohnpei increasingly grows and exports human capital in the form of its own people to the United States as laborers in the global economy.

These economic migrants bring with them a culture which, despite many changes in form, retains much of its substance and salience in the lives of individuals. In no small part, Pohnpeians' commitments to family and their desire for social recognition spur their movement throughout the U.S. sphere. This dissertation focuses on five groups of Pohnpeians in Pohnpei and the U.S., comparing the ways in which these social units generate group cohesion.

The process of both community formation and maintenance this research identifies has deep roots in Pohnpeian history and repeats through time, regardless of specific circumstances. Communities on Pohnpei are found in local-level chiefdoms known as sections, groups of 100-200 persons linked to a place-based chiefdom, headed by a chief who awards titles to participants in his section—the majority of whom are often family members. A linked set of factors entailing leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles inheres in community formation and function. These factors repeat in modified forms in the several groups studied: a traditional Pohnpeian chiefdom on Pohnpei, Kolonia (the sole town on Pohnpei), communities of Pohnpeian migrants in Kansas City and separately in Cincinnati, and a group in the U.S. without specific location based on native membership in the Madolenihmw paramount chiefdom of Pohnpei.

## Contents

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
The Focus.....	1
From Whence This Work Comes.....	3
Methods.....	6
Academic Framing.....	14
Overview of Subsequent Chapters.....	24
CHAPTER TWO: BACKGROUND .....	28
Roots of Pohnpeian Communities: Pre-Western Contact Period (1000 BCE – 1828 CE) .....	28
Post-Western Contact Period (1828 – 1886).....	30
Pre-World War II Colonial Period (1886 – 1945).....	32
Post-World War II Period: The American Era (Part I) (1945 – 1986) .....	35
Post-Compact Period: The American Era (Part II) (1986 – Present).....	36
CHAPTER THREE: POHNPEIAN CHIEFTAINSHIP AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION.....	39
Pohnpeian Chieftainship .....	39
Paramount Chiefdom-level Titles .....	39
Section-level Titles.....	44
Pohnpeian Social Organization in General .....	51
The Six Linked Factors: Leadership-Family-Place-Production-Chiefdom-Titles.....	53
Overview of Pohnpeian Social Organization.....	57

CHAPTER FOUR: FIVE POHNPEIAN POPULATION AGGREGATES—AN OVERVIEW ..	59
Introduction—The Five Groups.....	59
Pohrasapw, Kitti.....	59
Kolonia, Pohnpei.....	61
Cincinnati Metropolitan Area .....	64
Kansas City Metropolitan Area.....	66
Mehn Madolenihmw Nan Midwest (The Madolenihmw Section of the Midwest).....	69
Five Pohnpeian Social Configurations—A Summary .....	71
Comparison of Observed Group Characteristics .....	79
CHAPTER FIVE: POHNPEIAN POPULATION UNITS IN ACTION .....	82
Groups Cohere through Activities .....	82
Types of Activities by Group .....	99
Population Unit Activities Summary .....	106
Group Activities—Institutional Scaffolding .....	107
CHAPTER SIX: LEADERSHIP, FAMILY, GROUP MEMBERSHIP, SOCIAL COHESION ..	112
Pohnpeian Social Groups—Basic Aspects.....	112
Leadership Abilities .....	112
Family Traits .....	114
Identity and Group Membership/Affiliation/Cohesion.....	118
Leadership, Family, Identity Categories, and Group Cohesion Traits .....	125
Group Leadership, Family Residence, Identity Categories, and Group Cohesion .....	130

CHAPTER SEVEN: PLACE, PRODUCTION, SECTION, SOCIAL RANK, FLEXIBILITY .	132
Location, Place, and Chieftainship .....	132
A Member of Our Place or a Member of Another Place.....	132
Cohesive Social Groups Exist in Places .....	134
Group Activities, Production, and Tribute .....	136
Section as Place/Participant-member Group .....	137
Rank Manifest in Titles .....	139
Mobility and Flexibility .....	143
Place, Production/Redistribution, Section Status, Rank, and Flexibility.....	145
Place Status, Resource Utilization, and Chiefdom Organization.....	150
CHAPTER EIGHT: POPULATION UNIT COMPARISONS .....	152
The Core Relationship: Leadership-Family-Place-Production-Chiefdom-Titles .....	152
The Six-Factor Linkage Review .....	156
The Five-Group Comparison Summary.....	156
Challenges to Social Organization and Group Cohesion.....	161
Mobility and Flexibility Generate, Rather Than Erode, Community Resilience.....	161
CHAPTER NINE: POPULATION UNIT ANALYSIS .....	169
Unique Aspects of Each Group.....	169
Five Population Units—Unique Aspects .....	179
The Five Population Units Grouped by Common Traits .....	182
Pohnpeian Mobility and Community Membership Flexibility.....	188

CHAPTER TEN: CONCLUSION.....	192
Overall Context.....	192
Cohesive Pohnpeian Groups.....	194
Complicating and Reconciling Factors—Mobility and Flexibility .....	195
Accommodating Preexisting Ways of Being to New Situations.....	197
Pohnpeian Social Organization—Some Generalizations.....	202
APPENDIX A—SELECTED HISTORICAL & CURRENT CHIEFDOM INFORMATION ...	209
Wehi en Kitti (Kitti Paramount Chiefdom).....	210
Kousapw en Wehi en Kitti (Sections of the Kitti Paramount Chiefdom) .....	211
Kousapw oh Soumas en Wehi en Kitti (Sections and Section Chiefs of the Kitti Paramount Chiefdom) .....	217

## Tables and Maps

Table 4.1: Traits by Population Unit .....	72
Table 5.1: Activities Present in Population Units .....	101
Table 6.1: Leadership, Family Residence, Native- and Participant-Member Identities, and Group Cohesion .....	126
Table 7.1: Location, Place, Redistribution, Section Organization, Rank, & Mobility/Flexibility	146
Table 8.1: The Leadership-Family-Place-Production-Chiefdom-Titles Linked Factors .....	153
Maps.....	219



## **Chapter One: Introduction**

### **The Focus**

This dissertation is the first comparative, multi-sited ethnographic study of transnational Pohnpeian communities. It builds on my previous research which focused primarily on the Kansas City community of Pohnpeians, specifically the chiefdom organized within this group (Hubbard 2013, 2016). This project expands the focus from a single Pohnpeian population unit to a comparative study of multiple communities. The basic problem the research and analysis synthesized in this dissertation considers is how group cohesiveness is achieved in five Pohnpeian population units with differing characteristics which arise in the context of transnational migration. It explores the nature of social organization that results from the group members' interactions and circumstances, as well as the implications this all has for the people who live and participate in these groups.

The five groups considered are: a traditional Pohnpeian section in the Kitti paramount chiefdom of Pohnpei called Pohrasapw, the sole town on Pohnpei named Kolonia, the Pohnpeians living in the Cincinnati metro area, the Kansas City metro area, and a section organized in the U.S. based on Madolenihmw paramount chiefdom heritage. All five population aggregates compared herein involve movement of residents impacted by globalization. Migration is particularly important to these groups—especially within the U.S.-Pacific and continental-U.S. spheres, facilitated by geopolitical relations, driven by economic and other considerations on both structural and agentic levels.

As is typical with im/migrants in general, Pohnpeians not residing on Pohnpei retain their native identity as Pohnpeians. They exist in transnational networks of consanguineal and affinal kin from which they draw, and to which they contribute, resources and meaning. For Pohnpeians,

the institution of chieftainship and chiefdom organization undergird and overlay much of social organization, but they take on unique forms with varying salience and significance in each of these populations. Pohnpeian chieftainship and chiefdoms reveal themselves in these social units as durable, flexible, and mobile, as they endure in and adapt to differing circumstances.

More specifically, the unit of Pohnpeian chieftainship translated as “section,” also referred to as “chiefdom,” distinguished from the higher-level “paramount chiefdom,” constitutes the basic unit of Pohnpeian social organization, ordering much of social life (Petersen 1982a:18; Hubbard 2016:154). Sections entail recognition of leaders, usually those most able to mobilize a group of people. A section is a unit typically comprised of primarily consanguineal and affinal kin. A preponderance of such a population unit will often live in relatively close proximity to one another, creating group identification with, and attachment to, a particular place. Living in this place, the population unit engages in productive activities, providing for their own needs and generating tribute rendered to chiefs at the structurally higher paramount-chiefdom level. As the group demonstrates the ability to be productive over time, the paramount chief will often recognize the group and the place they reside in as a lower-level chiefdom or section. At that time, he will confer on the group's principal leader the status of section chief, an office which entails the ability to grant section titles. Being marked by a title bestows a crucial identity marker upon a Pohnpeian and formalizes a chief's influence over an individual and his or her family and group (Petersen 1982a:133; Hubbard 2016:161).

With section organization being the prototypical mechanism by which Pohnpeian social groups are structured and through which they cohere, this dissertation explores if and how section organization manifests in five Pohnpeian population units. Where formal section organization does not appear in a given group, it considers whether sections impact individuals in

such conditions. Further, where section organization is not present in a particular population unit, this research analyzes whether the underlying principles of section organization—the connection between leadership, family, place, production, chiefdom, and titles—are present in some form, how they manifest, and what implications that has for the particular individuals and groups.

Within this context, Pohnpeians form groups based on varying degrees and combinations of shared location, a sense of place, and group membership and participation. They conduct social activities in the realms of the political, economic, ceremonial, and competitive within and between various groups. These groups form based on principles of family, rank, mobility and flexibility, group cohesion, and resource sharing and redistribution. What emerges from this analysis is the underlying structural linkage present in sections, a constellation of factors involving leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles. Along with notions of belonging, group cohesion, and mobility and flexibility, these factors are applied to each group to identify similarities and differences in group social organization. On Pohnpei, sections generally provide the basis for, and manifestation of, these factors. This study emerges from my experiences and research while living on Pohnpei and subsequently interacting with Pohnpeians in diverse situations and locations.

### **From Whence This Work Comes**

My initial exposure to Pohnpei came in the form of missionary service on the island from 1992 through 1994. I was stationed at one time or another in all five paramount chiefdoms—Madolenihmw, Uh, Kitti, Nett, and Sokehs, three times in Kolonia, and a six-month stint on Guam working among Pohnpeians there. Residential patterns quickly emerged and I noticed Pohnpeians lived as nuclear and extended families on farmsteads, separated by the dense, lush tropical plant-life of the island. This appearance left me with an initial illusion of isolation, one

that soon opened up to the reality of interconnectedness and mobility as I learned the well-worn pathways from one residence to another—most frequently connecting close kin—and witnessed the interlinked trails' near-constant use. What ultimately struck me most was Pohnpeians' consistent engagement with family, their hard work to procure fish, produce crops and livestock, their frequent feast attendance, and seemingly pervasive respect for, and responsiveness to, chiefs.

While living on Guam, I began to work with Pernet Hadley, the grandson of a former Madolenihmw paramount chief of Pohnpei. Hadley and I worked together for about eight months of the 25 I spent in Micronesia. Working with Hadley enhanced my Pohnpeian language skills, particularly improving my comfort with, and understanding of, honorifics, which has proven beneficial in my work with Pohnpeian chiefdoms. While I had found chieftainship interesting from the start, I had not paid much mind to the details of Pohnpeian sociopolitics—other than trying to be aware of it and pay it due respect—until I worked with Hadley.

Overall, I learned a great deal about Pohnpeian daily life and social structure. Some main points included the importance of family, particularly matrilineal clanship, the profound implications of titles, and the realities and patterns of sociopolitical divisions and place-based identity. The centrality of community found in Pohnpeian sociopolitical units called *kousapw* or “sections” came to the fore as part of this focus on place and community belonging.

Fast-forwarding to 2009, a Japanese coworker and friend connected me with a group of Pohnpeians who worked at a Japanese steakhouse in Kansas City. This introduced me to the Kansas City community of Pohnpeians—the largest population of Pohnpeians outside the Pacific; Pohnpeians in Hawai'i may outnumber those in Kansas City, those in Guam certainly do, and Pohnpei remains the largest center of Pohnpeian population. Happenstance plays a role in

Kansas City's status among Pohnpeian population units—actually this is the complex combination of individual motivations, structural forces, and historical contingency. As I discuss elsewhere (Hubbard 2013, 2016), U.S. geopolitical relations with Micronesia stemming from Japanese aggression against the U.S. and occupation of Pohnpei during World War II is a prerequisite here. U.S. education funding policy with the FSM triggered a significant early wave of migration. Ultimately, the Compact of Free Association between the U.S. and FSM facilitated significant movement of Pohnpeians to Kansas City. This combination of factors applies to Pohnpeians in the U.S. sphere broadly, and specifically to the continental U.S.

A Pohnpeian sibling set living in Kansas City, as well as their extended kin and affines, welcomed me into their group. One of their relatives told me there was a section in Kansas City—a fact that surprised me given my perception that sections were localized, Pohnpeian land-based organizations. This phenomenon became the focus of my master's thesis (Hubbard 2013) and subsequent article (Hubbard 2016). Further, I found that the oldest brother of the sibling set was the current Kansas City section chief. The youngest sibling invited me to an upcoming section feast in the fall of 2012. Upon returning from the feast with the oldest sister of the sibling set, Nahnei, and her husband, Soulik, Nahnei informed me she was adopting me. Nahnei went on to advocate for me in the community, cajoling her brother, the section chief, into giving me a title, facilitating my regular participation in the Kansas City section. Nahnei subsequently fell ill and eventually passed away. I witnessed first-hand the full extent of a community mobilized to action for a member tied to it through family relations, residence, participation, and chieftainship-based rank.

Over the years I have interacted with many Pohnpeians and their communities, with Hadley and Nahnei being the two with whom I spent the most time. Hadley was my early guide

in Pohnpei and Micronesia generally, a peer in age but certainly my superior in rank and experience. In Kansas City, Nahnei treated me like a son, despite my lack of Pohnpeian biological heritage and intermittent community engagement. These interactions spanning over 25 years—though most concentrated in 1992-1994 and 2012-present provided the opportunity to explore the nature of community and, in particular, how communities of Pohnpeians cohere in various places with some variable—and other common—characteristics. Using traditional anthropological methods, I explore and analyze those similarities and differences, as well as some ramifications of those commonalities and divergences in and between five Pohnpeian social groups with which I have considerable experience.

## **Methods**

### *Notes on Fieldwork*

As implied by the above introduction, this dissertation is based on two variations of immersive experience. This fieldwork involved extensive co-residence with Micronesians, participant observation in Pohnpeian groups and wider communities, and thousands of interactions and unstructured interviews, culminating in ethnographic research. The first experience was a two-year residence in Micronesia, primarily on Pohnpei, from 1992-1994. During this time, I lived and worked primarily with Micronesians as a Mormon missionary.

Though accepted in the specific religious community in which I participated, my identification as a Mormon and an American marked me as twice-marginalized for Pohnpeians. Other than in Utah and a few other places around the world, Mormons are often viewed as—at best—curious outsiders. On Pohnpei, it was no different in some ways but quite different in others. Pohnpeians generally consider “the Church” to mean the Catholic Church and/or the Protestant Church—the latter of which being their general label for the Methodist sect which

spread in Pohnpei and ultimately through much of central and western Micronesia. Other religions are looked down upon and considered illegitimate in many ways. However, on Pohnpei any specialist, whether it be missionary or minister of any rank from any denomination, is treated with respect and even deference. So, despite my youth at the time, Pohnpeians of both genders, and all ages and ranks welcomed and engaged with me and my cohort, though to my sensibilities with generally well-concealed reservation and circumspection.

After I learned the Pohnpeian language at a functional level three to four months into my tenure, I began to be frequently paired with native-Micronesian missionaries. In fact, for well over half of my nearly 25-month stay in Micronesia, in addition to working exclusively among Pohnpeians, my “companions” were Micronesians. In general, when working with Micronesians, and especially when working with the aforementioned Hadley, I sensed my acceptance by Pohnpeians to be more open than when joined by most of my American colleagues.

Americans are marked by the term “mehn Wai” which carries a specific translation of “the people who wander” but has come to mean, essentially, “foreigner.” All other foreigners are known by their countries of origin but Americans are generally simply called foreigners. This likely has several causes, not the least of which include Americans' extensive involvement in early Pohnpei-based trading and whaling, as well as being the bringers of Christianity and the Christian God to the island in the mid-1800s (Hanlon 1988). Further, Americans liberated Pohnpeians from what became an oppressive Japanese regime at the end of World War II, setting up the geopolitical relationship with the U.S. that endures to this day (Petersen 1985; Hubbard 2016).

In terms of past, present, and power, Americans predominate in this foreigner category. Unlike most other nations today, even some Micronesian countries such as many native

Chamorros on Guam, Pohnpeians have a generally positive, if sometimes cautious, attitude toward Americans. Despite this relatively genial disposition toward Americans, in the 1990s most Pohnpeians did not speak much English, so absent my acquisition of the Pohnpeian language, communication would have been difficult. In fact, speaking Pohnpeian, especially speaking it relatively well, is a ticket in the door to Pohnpeian society in many ways.

My facility with the language and connection to people from virtually every corner of Pohnpei paved the way to my second immersive experience with Pohnpeians. That encounter has been a prolonged engagement with Pohnpeian communities in the U.S. and also on Pohnpei from 2012 through the present. This latter interaction has been sometimes daily for extended periods in person, frequent monitoring and engagement in Facebook posts, and multiple extended visits to Cincinnati and elsewhere. These visits include four multi-week stays in Cincinnati alone during 2015 and 2016 and two several weeks' long visits with Nahnei's family on Pohnpei during 2014 and 2016, near the Pohrasapw section. My engagement has been driven by involvement in section activities, including as a title-holding member in both the Kansas City and Pohrasapw sections. I also participated in Micronesian Women's Day events as a spectator, speaker, and panelist, as well as in softball tournaments as a spectator, speaker, and co-organizer. Other involvement includes weddings, birthdays, graduations, funerals, memorials, fund-raising activities, social visits, and assisting with financial and medical challenges, including linguistic and cultural translation.

These connections and activities facilitated participant-observation, hundreds of unstructured but often in-depth interviews, including multiple follow-ups, and an ongoing relationship with individuals, families, and communities. My knowledge of and fluency in the Pohnpeian language, in addition to American English, has allowed me access to multiple



generations of Pohnpeians, with many among the older generation, including Nahnei, being more comfortable speaking and hearing Pohnpeian than English. Connections formed through multiple kinship groups and networks generally facilitated access to the individuals and groups living in the multiple places this study considers—Pohrasapw and Kolonia on Pohnpei and Cincinnati, Kansas City, and the Madolenihmw section in the U.S. serving as a fifth point of comparison.

### *Methodology and Analysis in Humanistic Anthropology*

The sort of anthropology I practice follows in the humanistic tradition, one which emphasizes participant-observation and cultural immersion (Cushing 1998; Malinowski 1922; Firth 1966; Geertz 1973b; Hanson 1972; 1982; Petersen 1982a). Anthropologists often go into the field with a good idea of what they want to learn but often find themselves focusing on something else entirely. In a presentation at the University of Kansas in April of 2014, anthropologist Michael Agar referred to himself as a sort of “ambulatory antenna,” an apt description of how anthropologists often work. They move about the geographic and social landscape constantly adjusting the dials to be in tune with the happenings of the moment. During the immersive experience of participant-observation, anthropologists give themselves over to the flow life in which they find themselves. Our hosts heavily influence—and often determine—where we go and what we see.

If this all sounds very allusive, and maybe elusive, that may be a fair reading in some respects. Our is an interpretive science in search of meaning (Geertz 1973a:5) and meaning is generated by interactions between people in the flow of life, across different domains of experience. It is constantly negotiated and renegotiated and is thus a bit slippery at times. Because of this nature of meaning—an immanently cultural phenomenon—the best way to get at

it is not through surveys, questionnaires, or structured interviews.<sup>1</sup> A well-trained anthropologist engaged in participant-observation and nonformal conversation is likely to produce data, that if not quantitatively verifiable, are still of superior quality to methods targeted at yielding statistics in these circumstances.

In the present case, I provide my communities of study by actual location. Many of my key contacts are named without pseudonyms because, in my judgment, obscuring who they are would be impossible and serve no reasonable purpose. Further, should anyone want to independently verify I did in fact work in the communities and with the people I claim I have, they can readily do so. I have also made clear who my adoptive family is, and it was to them that I gave myself over when conducting this study.

Like Agar, my experience was much like that of an ambulatory antenna, being moved around the physical and social landscape. My engagements, commitments, and interactions took me from hiking through the Pohnpeian jungle with a section chief to tend kava plants to state-of-the-art cancer treatment centers helping my adoptive mother receive health care, to driving her to the store to get food to prepare for section feasts and negotiating lease changes with landlords. This process also led from conversations with the third highest-ranking chief in all of Kitti and former governor of Pohnpei sitting together on his covered porch during a Pohnpeian downpour to planning and administering softball tournaments in Kansas City with a high-ranking Madolenihmw chief. I hung out in restaurants with people while they worked and took breaks and attended kava markets and fund-raising groups in Kansas City and Cincinnati, all the while observing, watching, listening, learning. The upshot of it is that I had access to multiple, various domains of experience, candid conversations, and a wealth of information I could never have

---

<sup>1</sup> Of particular note in the present case, Pohnpeians are inherently suspicious of such methods, with participation rates likely to be far lower, yielding results of inferior quality should such methods be pursued rather than giving oneself over to experiencing life alongside them across a number of domains of experience.

been privy to utilizing qualitative methods rather than living life alongside people who opened themselves up to me knowing full well part of my being there was to do research. That kind of bond and that level of access to lived experience only comes with time, commitment, and—in my estimation—genuine care for the “human subjects” (I prefer, simply, people) with whom we work.

The result of this kind of research is typically referred to as ethnography and ethnographic research has its own kind of logic, culminating in a “narrative of connections and contingencies through time” (Agar 2004:414). Anthropologists formalized these narratives based on their lived experience of the connections they form and contingencies they encounter while living alongside the people they study, embedded in their communities and daily lives (Geertz 1983). “Researchers build narratives out of data of different types. They don’t always know what will be useful until they find it, and what they find will change what the story becomes and what they look for next” (Agar 2004:414). In this case, the data are documented in over a thousand pictures, videos, and audio recordings resulting in around a hundred hours of visual and auditory documentation and reminders, along with notes taken in the field and the residues of my experiences leading to this particular ethnography.

One of the significant advantages of participant-observation is that, in addition to anthropologists’ functionality as “ambulatory antennas,” they are also, as mentioned above, constantly tuning into the exigencies of the moment giving them functional adaptability. Along with this, they are able to narrow their focus onto the impacts of a particular issue across a variety of experiences. In this regard, anthropologists feature a sort of built-in Bayesian analytical robustness and rigor. We are constantly updating our knowledge, our assumptions, and our hypotheses as we encounter new experiences. Indeed, just this sort of process occurred

during this research project, in particular, as I encountered Pohnpeian community dynamics and chieftainship in unexpected forms and applications in the U.S.

Some may assert that such a research approach lacks scientific rigor. I disagree. As with scientific research, we begin anthropological research by identifying a problem (Hanson 1982:74). In this case, I look at how cohesive Pohnpeian communities form in the era of globalization and transnational migration, paying particular attention to the role chieftainship plays in the groups studied and the meaning it carries for them. The process continues in assembling information about the issue at hand in context, following the procedures noted above, looking for information, redundancy, and intelligibility (Hanson 1982:75). Indeed, the comparative analysis looks at the information gathered about group cohesion, identity, and chieftainship in these five groups, notes redundancies, and sorts out what we can learn from the information found in the departures from the norms. I classify as these departures as exaptations—creative applications of previously available cultural resources.

By comparing communities in diverse locations featuring a variety of characteristics, some of which correlate and others of which covary with one another, this study gets at relevant information about the problem (Hanson 1982:76). In analyzing the data, pertinent points of which are summarized in the tables in Chapters Four through Seven, I developed hypotheses through a process of “abduction” by applying previously understood instances in analogous situations to the ones at hand (Hanson 1982:77). The hypotheses formed are modified as new experiences demand, following the Bayesian process I find inherent in anthropological research. The hypotheses are then tested through experience and observation. Modifications are made until a workable hypothesis developed (Hanson 1982:81). In this case, the factors used in arriving at the general model this study asserts are laid out in Table 8.1. This hypothesis states that

Pohnpeian community formation and maintenance involves a set of six linked factors necessary for cohesion and durability. The process anthropological research reliant on participant-observation follows is humanistic in its focus and experiential—and experimental—in nature. But it is one that follows general scientific principles despite being mediated by an anthropologist relying on a particular lived experience grounded in community life.

### *Theoretical Orientations*

Living on Pohnpei planted the seeds of what I have come to see as the ecological basis of life in general and human communities in particular—the fundamental, though increasingly mediated, relationship between individual, group, and environment (Bateson's 2000:451 “flexible organism-in-its-environment”). In this case, the conception starts with individual-group-place-community, but it goes well beyond that to explicitly and implicitly recognize other factors. In both the broader and deeper contexts, these factors include “a community's history and ... its economic and political linkages with other local, regional, national, and international systems” (Kozaitis 2000:57).

As mentioned above, this dissertation presents research and analysis of contemporary Pohnpeian populations in four discrete places, as well as a delocalized group based on paramount chiefdom identity and sociopolitical organization. Each unit draws on place-specific ecological resources as people live in nested but linked settings. Overall, this work recognizes the “intersection of global, national, regional, and local systems, the outcome of the interaction of multiple levels and multiple factors” (Kottak 1999:23). Some of these levels and factors which intersect within the groups considered herein include: American geopolitical relationships, core-periphery distinctions within American colonialism, global capitalism, and ecological

interconnections.<sup>2</sup> The deeper historical milieu includes Pohnpeian principles and institutions with frequently rich and complex histories. These Pohnpeian groups reveal enhanced, increasing mobility combined with accelerating, frequent encounters with other—often very different—cultures and peoples.

The result of this dissertation is a controlled comparison (Eggan 1954; Hanson 1973) of five manifestations of Pohnpeian groups, analyzing each in an iterative juxtaposition to the others to evaluate the nature of community in each and determine how—or if—these population aggregates constitute communities. This comparative exercise includes a base case of Pohnpeian community in Pohrasapw, then Kolonia on Pohnpei with its direct colonial roots, as the name suggests. The study considers two further-removed situations in Cincinnati and Kansas City, and includes a delocalized Madolenihmw population unit in the U.S. as well, a configuration which pushes the bounds of community. Proceeding in this fashion—following Eggan's (1954) controlled comparison method—facilitates isolation of variables with each case, enhancing the comparative process and analytical results in these diverse places to which Pohnpeians have moved and settled, and from which they move again.

## **Academic Framing**

### *Typical Areas of Focus in Migration Studies*

The term migration connotes its undefined directionality and indefinite status, as opposed to immigration or emigration, which imply unidirectional permanence. To contextualize the magnitude of migration overall, as of 2013, the 231,522,200 migrants in the world number just less than the population of Indonesia with 237,641,326 persons (UN 2013a; UN 2013b). While

---

<sup>2</sup> It is the linkages and levels of the “new cultural ecology” espoused by Kottak (1999) and Kozaitis (2000) that this work utilizes. The many other productive aspects of the approach, including more detailed ecological factors and political critiques are generally not a focus here.

some scholars characterize these flows as essentially economic in nature (De Genova 2002; Lopez 2007), others emphasize kinship and agency, such as pursuit of education and escape from traditional authority (Kallen 1982; Marshall 2004; Hubbard 2013, 2016). These studies often focus on aspects of social justice, including illegality, discrimination, and exploitation. Other scholars highlight individual opportunities and effects on migrants' communities of origin created by migration (Marshall 2004).

The points of origin and destination of these erstwhile travelers are defined and bounded by nation-states and the related institutions that create and reveal these governing entities. People moving between nation-states with the permission of the receiving government are classified by the receiving nations as visitors, migrants, or immigrants, depending on their intentions and the permitted length of stay. Those persons moving into a nation-state's territory without first obtaining permission are marked as "undocumented," "irregular," "illegal," and/or "alien" depending on the receiving nation's current stance toward the people so classified (De Genova 2002). A nation-state essentially defines such unsanctioned presence by foreign nationals in its territory by their failure to comply with legally established and authorized presence. Following Michael Eve (2010) and De Genova (2002), some individuals' unauthorized presence is defined by their legally-established absence from a sanctioned category.

Ours is an epoch defined by increased speed of movement of capital, goods, ideas, and people emanating from numerous points, moving with variable velocities along multiple axes, with countless possible destinations (Appadurai 1996). However, Robert Adams, Jr. (2006:78) notes:

Sidney Mintz reminds us that a change in terminology can often obscure similar processes separated by time: "The massive movement of people is centuries old. The identification of persons with more than one community is similarly ancient. . . . The new theories of transnationalism and globalization are not respectful enough of history,

especially of the history of exploration, conquest and the global division of labor. . . . The sky is not falling, and a new day has not been born. Things aren't what they used to be, to be sure; but they never were" [1998:131].

What is different now, as Fassin (2011) and Saskia Sassen (2010, 2013) observe, is the speed of movement, the extent of labor division, and the extraordinary contradiction between the ease of movement of capital, goods, and information and the relative restriction on the movement of people, despite the displacement they experience in connection with the globalized market.

Pohnpeian communities arise in the U.S. partly due to the extensive reach and influence of globalization, but more particularly in this case to geopolitics, specifically U.S.-FSM political relations. Passing in 1983 and effective 1986, Pohnpei and its fellow members of the Federated States of Micronesia, Chuuk, Yap, and Kosrae, entered into the Compact of Free Association with the U.S., opening the doors to migration by Micronesians (Petersen 1985).<sup>3</sup> This arrangement allows citizens of the FSM to live and work in the U.S. and its territories with minimal documentation or restrictions. Pohnpeian groupings form in the U.S. within this larger geopolitical and economic context, which modify relationships within and between communities on Pohnpei itself.

### *Theoretical Perspectives*

In general, globalization theory looks at the systemic forces inducing, structural causes of, and individual reasons for, movement in migration (Appadurai 1996; Sahlins 1999; Friedman 2000; Friedman 2013). This study analyzes how these mutually influencing factors affect Pohnpeian population aggregates. This focus attends to indigenous communities and the accompanying sociopolitical systems in the context of global migration, exploring how they continue to exert influence on migrants, extending and creating both benefits and burdens.

---

3 The Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau likewise have Compacts of Free Association with the U.S. Guam is a U.S. territory, and Saipan, Tinian, and Rota are part of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.



Globalization theory's two main branches—individual empowerment and cultural production on the one hand, and attention to global political and economic systems on the other—in conjunction with migration theory inform this research (Appadurai 1996; Sahlins 1999; Friedman 2000; Friedman 2013).

Theories on migration highlight the structure-agency tension evident in globalization in a particular context pertinent to this case, as people move through and because of global systems (De Genova 2002; Lopez 2007) for individual reasons (Kallen 1982; Marshall 2004). This project employs these theories together by analyzing the broader context of globalization, the particular situation of migration, and the practical and structural mechanisms to investigate Pohnpeian population aggregates in Pohrasapw, Kolonia, Cincinnati, Kansas City, and the Madolenihmw group in the United States.

As I mention above, the webs of interconnection of Pohnpeian people facilitate their movement, leading to the conditions of interest to this study. In addition to ethnographic methods and controlled comparison, this study attends to social networks. By using social network analysis, I also make implicit theoretical assumptions. For example, Actor-network theory (ANT) posits that networks of humans and capital create, maintain, and reproduce social arrangements that generate ideologies, as well as social and material resources and conditions (Callon 1986; Law 1992; Latour 1999; Fox 2000). This theory fits well with the empirical condition of Pohnpeians in Kansas City and Cincinnati, as actors form and maintain these communities by moving through and existing in their social networks.

Additionally, this study presupposes structural forces (e.g., culture, sociopolitical systems, economic processes) shape the conditions Pohnpeians encounter. However, it also assumes Pohnpeians recognize and make choices impacting their conditions and, accordingly,

shape existing structural forces. Social network analysis and its theoretical counterparts strive to overcome the classic structure-agency dilemma (Garfinkel 1974:16-17; Hanson 2011) by situating agents within social networks shaped by structural factors that agents reproduce and modify in a continual iterative process. This study will explore how Pohnpeian chieftainship influences people and how people modify chieftainship and apply it in novel situations facilitated by the networks they inhabit and create.

Actor-network theory highlights that whether we focus on global systems and structures or individual choices, these formations and motives arise in and work through networks of people with particular, ever-changing practices, norms, and values (Law 1992; Latour 1999; Callon 1999; Fox 2000). This research relies more specifically on Mark Granovetter's (1973, 1983) research on the importance of connections, or ties, between people in creating and maintaining communities. Taking these three theories together provides this study with the broader context (globalization), the particular situation (migration), and the practical and structural mechanism (networks) to grasp the situation Pohnpeians (and Pohnpeian chieftainship) exist in and generate in Pohrasapw, Kolonia, Cincinnati, Kansas City, and the U.S.-Madolenihmw section.

### *Mobility and Encounter*

Mobility has become an increasingly pervasive fact of life in the globalized world—though certainly not for all (Glick Schiller and Salazar 2013:184; De Genova 2002; Adams 2006; Fassin 2011; Sassen 2010, 2013).<sup>4</sup> Increasing mobility calls into question the apparent boundedness of nations and the naturalness of identity, opening new possibilities for those with access to transportation (Glick Schiller and Salazar 2013:184; De Genova 2002; Adams 2006;

---

<sup>4</sup> Increasing mobility is a condition precedent for mass migration, but does not necessarily result in migration as mobility is simply the ability to move between locations with relative ease.

Fassin 2011; Sassen 2010, 2013). Pohnpeians have long been mobile, with seven colonizing voyages instrumental in bringing people to the island itself (Bernart 1977:7-15). The mid-1800s ABCFM<sup>5</sup> missionary, Albert Sturges, lamented Pohnpeian mobility, noting they could not be fixed to place or property (Petersen 1982a:134). Mobility has been a fact of life for Pohnpeians since there have been Pohnpeians, but American geopolitics in the form of the Compact of Free Association (the “Compact”), combined with ready—though costly—access to air travel opens more options for Pohnpeian movement throughout the world.

Thus, the lens of globalization provides one view of the situation in which Pohnpeians find themselves. Pohnpeians experience the world as governmental entities and economic processes intersect with individual drives and local imperatives, creating connections and relationships throughout the world—primarily in the sphere of Pohnpei and the United States mainland and its Pacific island territory of Guam and state of Hawai'i.<sup>6</sup> As Pohnpeians move throughout the world, they create webs of interconnection that form, dissolve, and reform. Pohnpeians follow circuits of relationships, shaped primarily by kinship connections and access to economic resources, mostly in the form of jobs. They maintain these connections by telephone and increasingly through Facebook and Skype as their networks expand from the family and what appear as geographically bounded communities on Pohnpei throughout the U.S. Pacific sphere, the continental U.S., and elsewhere.

Encounter with others and cultural exchange and appropriation result from these linkages and flows (Appadurai 1990; Sahlins 1999; Rofel 2014). The connection between the United States and Pohnpei dates to the days of the whalers and Christian missionaries in the mid-1800s (Riesenberg 1968:2; Hanlon 2004:208; Petersen 2007:324). Pohnpeians adopt American culture,

---

5 “ABCFM “stands for the American Board of Commissioners for the Foreign Missions—a Boston, Massachusetts-based Congregationalist sect descended from the Puritans (Petersen 2007:324-325).

6 See Inda and Rosaldo 2002:2 for a general discussion on these aspects of globalization.

language, and economic goods into their cultural, linguistic, and economic systems, creating new uses and meanings. This process has intensified since the 1945 Trust Territory administration and subsequent Compact, which connected the United States and Pohnpei politically and opened the borders to flows of people, in addition to ideas and goods (Petersen 1979; Hanlon 2004; see also Fassin 2011; Vertovec 2011).

Pohnpeians carry with them preexisting relationships and networks, as well as their own cultural norms, values, and understandings, which are increasingly already influenced by American culture and education. Pohnpeians apply these norms, values, understandings, and relationships in new settings, adjusting them to the way Americans react to them. Thus, Pohnpeians and Pohnpeian culture experience a displacement and re-emplacement as a result of their global interconnections and movements. Looking at the conjunction of global political and economic systems (Friedman 2013) and local Pohnpeian cultural practices and social systems (Riesenberg 1968; Petersen 1982a; Hubbard 2016), this study explores some of the ramifications of these movements on, most particularly, Pohnpeian individuals, their communities, and the institution of chieftainship.

Micronesians are especially reliant upon kinship networks, using them to establish relationships across distant islands through kinship (Petersen 2009) and situating individuals on social maps (Hezel 2013) based on family and hierarchy. Community organization starts here—with family units led by elders in a localized situation, often marked by chieftainship (Riesenberg 1968; Petersen 1982a; Hubbard 2016). The U.S.-based Pohnpeian groups—and even Kolonia on Pohnpei—feature variations on the prototypical Pohnpeian community situation found in Pohrasapw. Pohnpeian groups may not cluster in exclusive communities like some other migrants do—forming, for example, a Little Italy or Chinatown—but Pohnpeians do tend to

congregate as groups, reflecting a number of patterns established on Pohnpei. These patterns include dispersed residence on productive farmsteads which cluster by family, aggregating to form groups of often-related families overlaid by section organization (Riesenberg 1968; Petersen 1982a; Hubbard 2016). The individuals and families comprising these corporate groups conduct redistributive and other activities contributing to mutual support, such as funerals, marked by simultaneously cooperative and competitive community feasts. This sort of organization and the related social activities are infused by titles awarded by a local leader, who is frequently the head of the family with the most members in the group.

### *Adaptations to New Contexts*

However, these different contexts—compared herein to Pohrasapw, and also Kolonia, but ultimately focusing more on Cincinnati, Kansas City, and the delocalized Madolenihmw group—trigger accommodations of preexisting ways of being to new situations. These accommodations can be seen as adaptations and sign-substitutions (Hanson 1989) within the overall perspective of a historicized structuralism (Sahlins 1999). The resulting formulations reflect novel adaptations based on recognizable patterns and principles. People tend to rationalize their beliefs and actions with reference to available tropes rather than inventing positions from whole cloth (Hanson 1989; Petersen 1992). Similarly, they accommodate previously existing practices and dispositions to new places and contexts. The relevant practices and principles derived from historical situations may—in duration and configuration after reapplication in the new contexts—bear little or no apparent resemblance to their origins. But, despite appearances, there is a connection. This dissertation considers the transposition of principles of Pohnpeian social structure, especially chieftainship and chiefdom organization, to new contexts and analyzes their resulting forms.

Such adaptations can be explored using the concept spandrels (Gould & Lewontin 1979; Pinker 1990; Sole & Valverde 2006; Littlewood 2009). Sole & Valverde (2006:421) explain the principle thus, “We can summarize the features of evolutionary spandrels as follows: (i) they are the byproduct of building rules; (ii) they have intrinsic, well-defined, non-random features; and (iii) their structure reveals some of the underlying rules of construction.” This definition refers to the architectural term spandrel, denoting the triangular gaps created at the sides of archways. These gaps arose as a byproduct of the larger architectural design but came to serve a more elaborated, artistic purpose, which could itself, over time, develop adaptive characteristics. Gould and Lewontin (1979) used this concept to describe how biological evolution could give rise to characteristics that were not tied directly to natural selection but survived as byproducts of the underlying needs (Gould and Lewontin 1979). This principle's application here will follow Petersen's (2009:50) use in Micronesian communities, particularly in Pohnpeian groups, and their tendency to reveal underlying patterns of construction based on previously established rules giving rise to chieftainship.<sup>7</sup>

The interrelated Pohnpeian concepts which I identify as the leadership-family-place-production-chieftdom-titles linkage, typically found in groupings called sections, emerged in a different context—in conditions similar to Pohrasapw—than what we see in the other population units considered. But this linkage is redeployed in Kolonia, Cincinnati, Kansas City, and the delocalized Madolenihmw group in various ways and with sometimes divergent effects.

Pohnpeians' creative applications of preexisting traditions and practices tracks with Hanson's

---

7 Petersen (2009:50) notes the importance of matriliney for initially establishing links between Micronesians but subsequently for structuring social life within Micronesian communities—Pohnpeian communities being his most detailed examples. This dissertation implicitly recognizes the importance of matriliney in the linked principles it develops in leadership-family-place-production-chieftdom-titles. Further, though this application of matriliney to internal community structure and function may not have had initial adaptive value, has developed adaptive qualities.

(1989) notion of the inventiveness of tradition, Petersen's (1992) off-the-shelf tradition, and the “permutation of older forms and relationships, made appropriate to novel situations” (Sahlins 1999:408-409). Further, sign-substitutions arise as people accommodate their new contexts to preexisting norms, principles and (often) institutions, engaging in creative deployment of available cultural techniques, meanings, and rationalizations (Hanson 1989).<sup>8</sup>

Historicized structuralism (Sahlins 1999:412) encompasses these interrelated notions—spandrels, permutations, and sign-substitutions. This approach emphasizes “the resistance of culture” (Sahlins 1999:412), specifically its adaptability through conscious and unconscious application to new situations. Regardless of whether change or encounter occurs through external imposition or apparently agentic action such as “voluntary” migration, people apply previous practices, principles, and institutions to new conditions. This attitude should not be taken to imply preadaptations or determinism. Instead, a spandrel may become an “exaptation,” a “behavioral trait that evolved to serve one function [which] could prove a handy adaptation for an entirely unanticipated one” (Tattersall 2013:115). Such is the case with Pohnpeian chieftainship. It arose as a spandrel derived from Pohnpeian matrilineal kinship to organize community life on Pohnpei, but it is deployed by, and applied to, groups in novel surroundings. In general, people and the groups they form retain agency and creativity despite—and within—contingent historical situations, regardless of their position in the global system. Whatever situations they encounter, they apply their own principles and “native categories” (Sahlins 1999:412), creating novel adaptations, as the previous principles, categories, and institutions combine with the new circumstances.

---

8 Elsewhere (Hubbard 2013; 2016) I have provided an application of this principle, specifically how cash substitutes for produce (*wahnsapw*) as an acceptable offering to Pohnpeian chiefs in certain contexts. The sign changed from produce to cash, but what it signifies—respect in the form of tribute to chiefs—remains unchanged.

Examples of spandrels here include paramount chiefdom-level identity, localized family-based social organization in the form of sections, and rank. These aspects of Pohnpeian life arose in very different circumstances than those in which they are applied in certain configurations found in the continental U.S. For example, though paramount chiefdoms authorize section organization, paramount chiefdom identity is not the primary organizing principle of sections—localized, cooperative kinship groups are. However, the Madolenihmw section in the U.S. uses paramount chiefdom-level identity as the primary organizing principle underwriting its existence, leaving residential proximity incidental. The resulting social formation is an exaptation of paramount-chiefdom identity and section organization. On the other hand, the Summit Heights community in Cincinnati exhibits traits of sections without section organization and uses paramount chiefdom-level titles to mark rank within a localized group of individuals with differing paramount-chiefdom identity. The Kitti paramount chief's organization of a section in Kansas City applies the shared-residence logic of Pohnpeian chiefdoms to yet another context—a migrant Pohnpeian community rather than its traditional application to groups strictly on Pohnpei. These results constitute exaptations, applications of spandrels—principles and institutions formed in different circumstances which obtained adaptive value—to the novel situation of Pohnpeian social organization found in the groups they form in the continental United States.

## **Overview of the Subsequent Chapters**

Chapter Two turns to the historical context of Pohnpeian community organization, tracing it through the distant past to the present using primarily anthropological and archaeological research. This history emphasizes the importance of mobility and encounter throughout Pohnpeian history, as well as the resilience of Pohnpeian culture. Intrinsic to this resilience is the



Pohnpeian institution of chieftainship and its role in structuring community and establishing crucial aspects of individual and group identity.

Chapter Three attends to the principles and practices involved, as well as the institutions—principally chieftainship—that structure and support communities. The titles generated by chieftainship in communities serve as crucial identity markers and structuring mechanisms for Pohnpeian society. Other crucially important forms of identity involving native- and participant-member status are also discussed. These traits constitute important aspects of the six linked factors giving rise to Pohnpeian groups generally: leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles.

Chapter Four provides an overview of the populations in the four places mentioned—Pohrasapw, Kolonia, Cincinnati, and Kansas City—plus the delocalized U.S.-Madolenihmw group, and compares basic traits of these groups based in large part on the leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles constellation of factors. Though these groups feature significant differences in terms of community origin, history, location, and formal recognition, they share common themes in terms of salience in Pohnpeian community traits.

Chapter Five attends to Pohnpeian community activities and their ramifications for individuals and the larger Pohnpeian social system. This focus is particularly important as communities exist as such through action, cooperative and coordinated efforts within the group, and in competition with other similar groups. Common group activities include political and economic aspects, reproduction of population, ceremonial markers of significant life events, and general social activities, not the least of which are section feasts.

Chapter Six begins to take a more detailed look at how common traits emerge in the various groups, focusing on leadership, family, group membership, and social cohesion.

Although specific manifestations differ across these communities, these aspects all obtain.

Migration opens the opportunity for expansion of Pohnpeian identity categories to newly formed groups, facilitating emergence of community in these places.

Chapter Seven continues this exercise by focusing on the importance of place, group productivity, section status, social rank marked by titles, and the principles of mobility and flexibility. Rooted in Pohnpei as a physical location with place-specific meaning, Pohnpeian chieftainship retains salience in the circumstance of migration, both with reference to Pohnpei and as adapted to the new context. Rank tied to place is both complicated and enhanced by Pohnpeian personal mobility and institutional flexibility.

Having explored these aspects of Pohnpeian communities, Chapter Eight systematizes the interlinked principles and practices and applies them to the five groups in a comparative analysis. These factors are present in some form in all of these groups but with some variation in specific manifestation. After discussing the five groups and providing some comparisons, this chapter notes some potential challenges for maintaining group cohesion in each situation.

Chapter Nine discusses the comparative results, analyzing similarities identified across the groups, particularly the recurrence of the leadership-family-place-production-chieftdom-titles constellation of factors. However, each group reveals unique variations of this common linkage. The analysis culminates by grouping the groups according to shared traits, taking the analysis to a higher level of abstraction, identifying broader principles in play.

Chapter Ten summarizes the findings and closes with some generalizations based on this comparative study. The analysis focuses specifically on a comparison between the U.S.-based Pohnpeian communities, with reference to manifestations on Pohnpei, in an attempt to isolate variables and outcomes in the context of Pohnpeian migration. Specific exaptations—the

application of traits developed in one context to other, sometimes very different, situations—become clear in this comparative analysis. In each of the five groups considered, Pohnpeian principles, practices and institutions found in the leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles constellation of factors appear but in forms which differ markedly from the original case found on Pohnpei.

## Chapter Two: Background

### **Roots of Pohnpeian Communities: Pre-Western Contact Period (1000 BCE – 1828 CE)**

This chapter takes a chronological approach to Pohnpeian history as it provides an overview of the more relevant aspects of the ethnographic background pertinent to this study. Though it primarily divides Pohnpeian history up in a fashion based on Western interactions with Pohnpeians, it also incorporates the schema which Pohnpeians use to make sense of their own history. Western terms are marked by “Period” and Pohnpeian conceptions by “Era” in order to differentiate between scholars' conceptions and their reporting of native categories. Information on the prehistorical period is drawn primarily from Pohnpeian sources documented by Pohnpeians such as Luelen Bernart (1977) and Rufino Mauricio (1993), Saul Riesenberg's sources (1968), and still others via David Hanlon (1988).

#### *Deep (Pre-) Historical Period: The Era of Building (appx. 1000 BCE – 800 CE)*

Pohnpei is a volcanic island near the center of Micronesia, just north of the equator. The island is approximately 130 square miles, is bounded by a fringing reef, and receives as much as 300 inches of rainfall per year in the interior and 200 inches in the coastal regions (Petersen 1982a:130). Archaeological evidence and oral histories support an initial settlement of Pohnpei dating back more than 2,000 years (Ayers 1983:139; Mauricio 1993:13). Oral histories claim seven colonizing voyages; the first, which included nine women and seven men, led by a man named Sapwkini, resulted in nine initial matrilineal, matrilocal clans headed by local leaders recognized by systematized titles (Bernart 1977; Ayers 1983; Hanlon 1988; Mauricio 1993).<sup>9</sup>

---

9 Though we clearly cannot know specific motives of these waves of settlers reaching Pohnpei, Kirch (2002) suggests a pan-Oceanic ethos among Polynesians and Micronesians and their forerunners, which included adventure-seeking, privileging of elder descendants, and sometimes banishment. These aspects spurred people to migrate in search of new lands where, by right of settlement priority, they could establish themselves as the ranking clans with control of lands and titles. Contact with islands and societies of origin was apparently

Early systematization of titles seems to have been more independent and clan-specific than later phases of more-integrated Pohnpeian social development. However, these early communities followed a recurrent formation process and, as population increased over time, three polities emerged (Ayers 1983:136). The process which emerged in these early stages, and developed into a recurring pattern, involved individuals seeking out productive land, forming farmsteads, gathering family and allies to their new place of residence, generating produce, gaining recognition in the sociopolitical system dominant at the time, and obtaining titles marking them as leaders, reinforcing their position and influence (Bernart 1977; Ayers 1983; Mauricio 1993:349-350).

#### *The Saudeleur Era (800 CE – 1500 CE)*

Sometime between 800 CE and 1000 CE, two brothers named Ohlosihpa and Ohlosohpa headed a 100-person force in the sixth migration, leading to the Saudeleur Era, which lasted until about 1500 CE (Bernart 1977; Ayers 1983; Hanlon 1988; Mauricio 1993). Megalithic monuments such as the world-famous Nan Madol—now a World Heritage site—mark this period (Kirch 2002). However, Pohnpeians speak of this time as one of brutality, exploitation, and centralized power (Bernart 1977; Ayers 1983; Hanlon 1988; Mauricio 1993). Despite some degree of centralization, the basis of social organization remained one of local leaders heading family-occupied farmsteads recognized as discrete places, producing subsistence and tribute, leading to recognition within the sociopolitical system through titles (Hanlon 1988; Mauricio 1993). Evidence of numerous titles with Saudeleur-Era origins exist in the present sociopolitical order, often readily distinguishable from those of more recent emergence, suggesting robust

---

common (Bernart 1977; Ayers 1983; Hanlon 1988; Mauricio 1993). In the case of Pohnpei, the foundress of the so-called creature clan—the ranking clan of the Kitti paramount chiefdom—specifically made return trips to her home island and wanted to resettle there as she got older, but remained on Pohnpei so she could be with her children who were born and raised on Pohnpei and did not know her home island (Bernart 1977).

dispersion of sociopolitical rank even in the Saudeleur Era (Ayers 1983; Mauricio 1993). Hanlon (1988:13) notes the Saudeleurs essentially incorporated the preexisting sociopolitical order by reconstituting the clans and “sectional” chiefs' authority under their then-new order.

#### *The Nahnmwarki Era (1500 CE – 1890 CE)*

A combination of rebellion and conquest crystallized around an invading force led by Isokelekel and his band of 333 warriors who, united with local tribes, overthrew the Saudeleurs and initiated the Nahnmwarki Era from about 1500 CE until 1890 CE. This new regime brought relative emancipation rather than repression from another outsider, though with critical internal participation—particularly from the Soukisenleng of Onohnleng, now the Wene area of Kittu, who was instrumental in ushering in the post-Saudeleur polity (Hanlon 1988:21). The sociopolitical system that emerged from this era is explained below starting with the section on Pohnpeian Chieftainship. In sum, it features five paramount chiefdoms and a two-tiered matrilineal diarchy which persists to this day, notwithstanding the intervening events (Riesenberg 1968; Petersen 1982a; Hanlon 1988; Hubbard 2016).

Despite an apparent move from decentralization to centralization and back again (Mauricio 1993:16), the on-the-ground social order changed little during these pre-historic eras, characterized by localized matrilineal kin-groups led by individuals who oversaw productive labor, resulting in recognition for the individual and group within the sociopolitical system, marked by titles and place names (Bernart 1977; Mauricio 1993:23-24). Migrations and movement in general characterized Pohnpeian life, despite—and facilitated by—its kin-based, localized character (Mauricio 1993:23-24).

#### **Post-Western Contact Period (1828 – 1886)**

The Nahnmwarki Era in Pohnpeian reckoning bridges the gap between these pre- and

post-Western Contact Periods. Though sightings of Pohnpei by Spanish explorers may have occurred between 1526 and 1528 (Riesenberg 1968:2), European powers did not begin asserting colonial dominion over the island and its people until the 1880s (Hanlon 1988:144-145). Notwithstanding these rumored sightings and possible near-misses, a Russian ship captained by Feodore Lutke reached Pohnpei in 1828 and led to the first substantial documented outside interaction with Pohnpeian inhabitants (Hezel 1983:90).<sup>10</sup> Word of Pohnpei's deep harbors and welcoming people spread and trade began with no real colonial occupation occurring between 1828 and 1886. However, European and United States influence began in the 1830s with whaling (Hanlon 1988:73) and solidified with the importation or imposition of Christianity in the 1850s (Hanlon 1988:89). Christianity initially came in the form of a Boston-based Congregationalist group, later in the form of Spanish-imported Catholicism in the 1880s (Hanlon 1988:150).

During this time, American influence seems to have dominated foreign interaction as American whalers and Congregationalists established footholds on Pohnpei, with the entire island nominally Christian by 1880 or so (Petersen 1979:27). These goods and belief systems most definitely changed Pohnpeians' lives, but were largely assimilated into existing cultural systems, with people continuing their pattern of matrilocal residence and production of goods at the urging of kin-based leaders, resulting in tribute and recognition within the sociopolitical order (Hanlon 1988:xix). Small pox triggered a population crash around 1854-1855 (Petersen 1979:27), one from which Pohnpeians would fully recover only after an intervening century (Gorenflo & Levin 1992). Estimates indicate the Pohnpeian population dropped from in excess of 10,000 to around 2,000 during this time (Gorenflo & Levin 1992:5). The massive population

---

10 Possible and reported sightings by Westerners of Pohnpei, which became known as Ascension Island, date to as early as 1526, and direct contact may have been made prior to recorded interactions. The first substantiated contact was by the ship *John Bull* and Captain John Henry Rowe, who reports being chased by five canoes on May 25, 1827 (Riesenberg 1968:2-3).

losses, in a way, served to reinforce the sociopolitical system, as deaths caused vacancies in titles that needed to be filled, moving survivors into prestigious ranks they previously had little hope of obtaining.

## **Pre-World War II Colonial Period (1886-1945)**

### *The Spanish Era (1886 – 1899)*

In 1886, the Spanish asserted ownership of the island and established “Santiago de la Ascencion,” now known as Kolonia, as a colonial settlement in the historically prestigious *Mesenieng* area, meaning “face of the winds,” in the north of Pohnpei (Gorenflo & Levin 1992:5). Spanish attempts at colonial development were largely unsuccessful, however, and, “complicated by rivalries between native polities, quickly led to turmoil with the islanders—a condition that characterized most of the short period of active Spanish administration (Fischer and Fischer 1957:37-38; Hempenstall 1977:212-213)” (Gorenflo & Levin 1992:5-6). Cabez & Weyler (2012) reported the centrality of locally led family farmsteads generating significant production used as tribute in a highly developed sociopolitical system that recognized family heads with titles. Though brief in its duration, the Spanish Era includes at least two significant lasting implications for Pohnpeians. The first is the establishment of the Catholic Church, now recognized on par with the Protestant Church, and referred to together as simply “The Church.” The second is the founding of Kolonia itself, the groundwork of which has been—and continues to be—used by and for the benefit of foreign powers and by Pohnpeians with significant foreign—now global—interactions.

### *The German Era (1899 – 1914)*

In 1899, Germany gained possession of Pohnpei via purchase from Spain, establishing regional headquarters on Pohnpei, and eyeing economic development (Riesenberg 1968:5;



Petersen 1985). According to Gorenflo & Levin (1992:6), this process was far from a smooth one:

[P]roblems quickly ensued, due largely to German efforts to reorganize the traditional social hierarchy and recruit forced labor for construction projects. A rebellion by inhabitants of Sokehs Municipality eventually occurred in 1910, and though brought under control six months later ill feelings between natives and their German administrators persisted (see Fischer and Fischer 1957:51-58). Germany's inability to exploit Pohnpei State's population in an efficient manner stifled its attempts to develop the area economically.

The tenacity of the Pohnpeians in both challenging foreign domination and maintaining their traditional hierarchy, while resisting colonial economic exploitation, is noteworthy. The Sokehs Rebellion culminated in the execution of the German colonial governor—an event the German administration blamed on the Sokehs chiefs (Petersen 2007:318-319).

But this resistance was not without repercussions. In an attempt to destabilize the polity, the Germans executed 17 Sokehs rebels with high-ranking titles and deported 450 Sokehs residents to Palau in 1910 as a deterrent and retribution for the revolt and killing of Germans (Riesenberg 1968:27; Gorenflo & Levin 1992:6). The deportees were subsequently returned, but their land had been given to immigrants from Mwoakilloa, Pingelap, Sapwuafik, and Mortlock—refugees of the 1905 typhoon (Gorenflo & Levin 1992:6, Riesenberg 1968:27).

Critically, and possibly in response to the resistance they experienced in both the Sokehs Rebellion and generally, the German administration instituted private ownership of land, transferable by deed and subject to patrilineal inheritance. This procedure, which the Germans codified, replaced clan and chief ownership of all land (Riesenberg 1968:30). Petersen (1979:28) observed that chiefs—with their authority and the overall system destabilized by depopulation and colonial occupation—accepted this change with the compromise “which guaranteed them annual tribute feasts and joint control, along with the German governors, over the lands vacated by depopulation” (Petersen 1979:28) A Pohnpeian—himself a former sociology major—living in

Kansas City says that, in his opinion, the alienation of land ownership from the chiefs and clans has had the most lasting impact of any single event on the Pohnpeian way of life of any colonial action.

*The Japanese Era (1914 – 1945)*

The Japanese succeeded the Germans in colonial occupation in 1914, likewise looking for economic benefits, but also an increased military presence in the region (Riesenberg 1968:6; Gorenflo 1992:6). The League of Nations officially recognized the occupation in 1920. In partial contrast with the German efforts to abolish or severely compromise traditional authority, the Japanese largely turned the traditional chiefs into their functionaries. They used the existing political infrastructure in an effort to extract economic wealth from the land via exploitation of indigenous labor for the benefit of the Japanese empire (Gorenflo & Levin 1992:7). Accordingly, the fundamental Pohnpeian social structure involving leadership-family-place-production-chieftdom-titles experienced reinforcement rather than destabilization under Japanese occupation, in contrast to the German Era. However, the Japanese did not alter the German-era changes in land ownership, thus retaining the removal of direct control from the paramount chiefs to individuals following patrilineal inheritance rules.

World War II began in the Pacific with little direct impact on Pohnpeians, but, as the war turned against the Japanese, the occupiers became increasingly harsh towards their Pohnpeian vassals (Falgout 1991). An elderly Pohnpeian man told me in 1993 of his conscription to Palau in Japanese times to work as an administrator for the Japanese military. Although Pohnpeians generally supported the Japanese, their harsh treatment at Japanese hands and traumatic war experience—including having witnessed the awesome military might of the United States—predisposed them to welcome their new liberators cum occupiers. A story I frequently heard

while in Pohnpei from 1992 through 1994 was that of an American gripping a Japanese soldier by the throat and lifting him from the ground with one arm. Historically factual or not, this narrative and its accompanying visual lived on in the Pohnpeian collective consciousness, bearing witness to America's strength.

### **Post-World War II Period: The American Era (Part I) (1945 – 1986)**

Though Japanese occupation and brutality, along with American heroism and liberation, remain in many Pohnpeians' consciousness as the breakpoint marking the shift to American influence, as mentioned above, American trading and religion already had significant implications for Pohnpeians. These previous influences, along with German land reforms—shifting land ownership from the highest-ranking chiefs, the Nahnmwarki and Nahnken, and the matrilineal clans they represent to individuals governed by patrilineal inheritance—carried through to the Post-World War II Period. Petersen (1982a) observes the upshot of this latter change as a shift in emphasis from matrilineally controlled land to matrilineally controlled titles, evidencing flexibility of and persistence in the overall system, despite the accompanying change to predominantly patrilocal residence accompanying the shift to patrilineal inheritance (see also Hubbard 2013:97, 2016:170).

The American occupation was initially supervised by the U.S Navy, starting in 1945. Oversight responsibility shifted to the Department of the Interior, whose authority lasted until 1986 when the Compact took full effect. Unlike previous occupiers, the United States was not interested in direct economic exploitation, but rather exclusively in maintaining a strategic military position in the Pacific (Gorenflo & Levin 1992:8). Possibly the most noteworthy development during this time was the population explosion in Pohnpei, reaching upwards of 26,000 by 1986 (Gorenflo & Levin 1992:12). In addition to population increases during the pre-

Compact American era, Pohnpei became accustomed to foreign aid and was increasingly enmeshed in the global capitalist economic system (Petersen 1985).

Emphasis on traditional lifestyles decreased over time, and reliance on modern technology such as electricity, heavy equipment, non-indigenous building materials, processed foods, telecommunication, and the global transportation network consistently increased. Access to these new necessities was not—and is not—readily obtainable through the traditional system of subsistence and tribute practices, with their obligatory gifts of first-fruits to the various chiefs and reciprocal support to co-community members. Despite increasing reliance on money and foreign technologies, local kin groups remained the basis of the social order, still generating subsistence and tribute within the sociopolitical system, resulting in recognition of individuals and groups in the form of titles.

### **Post-Compact Period: The American Era (Part II) (1986 – Present)**

In 1983, a plebiscite involving the Micronesian islands of Pohnpei, Chuuk, Yap, and Kosrae was held to determine whether these four islands and their satellites would form the Federated States of Micronesia and affiliate with the United States. Pohnpeian respect for U.S. military prowess and dependence on aid notwithstanding, they—unlike their other Micronesian neighbors—voted to become an independent nation (Petersen 1984, 1985). Due to the structure of the plebiscite binding Pohnpei's fate to that of Chuuk, Yap, and Kosrae, their independence vote was overruled by the majority of the other island states. This result joined these islands as a nation comprised of four states to the United States in the aforementioned Compact of Free Association (Petersen 1985). The Federated States of Micronesia—comprised of Pohnpei, Chuuk, Yap, and Kosrae—is now bound to the United States by the Compact of Free Association

(Public Law 108–188—Dec. 17, 2003).<sup>11</sup> The Compact ideally allows for the free flow of goods and people between the United States and the Compact member states, but Pohnpeians see the Compact as reinforcing U.S. control over them in a parent-child relationship (Petersen 1985:23). Nahnei and others characterize Pohnpei as being “under the U.S.,” and emphasize the dependency relationship this implies, as well as the United States's pattern of falling short of fulfilling its responsibilities in this capacity.

Pohnpeians maintain an ambivalent attitude toward the U.S. They dislike being treated like children and being in a one-down relationship (Petersen 1985:23). They have had to contend with foreign domination in many forms throughout their history, whether the incursion was by Saudeleurs, Germans, Spanish, Japanese, or North Americans. However, of all of these foreign overlords and influences, Pohnpeians view the U.S. as the most benign and have incorporated this influence into their way of life more so than any except the very direct and long-term influence of the Saudeleur dynasty. Despite liberating them from the much more intrusive and forceful Japanese rule, Pohnpeians sacrifice their lives by enlisting more frequently in the U.S. military (Azios 2010; Hezel 2005:3) They die at a rate five-times higher than average due to their disproportionate representation in the infantry (Azios 2010; Hezel 2005:3). This fact suggests that, despite its apparent benevolence, the U.S. extracts a significant toll from Pohnpeians for their affiliation. As Pohnpei has shifted from regional power (Goodenough 1986) to bit player on the international stage (Hanlon 2009), the U.S. has emerged as the least of the several evils Pohnpeians have encountered. The long-term effects of this relationship on Pohnpeian life and culture may, in time, come to rival and possibly exceed that of the Saudeleurs.

The Compact certainly has resulted in a more direct interrelationship between Pohnpeians

---

<sup>11</sup> The Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau are likewise bound to the United States by their own Compacts of Free Association.

and the U.S. than the Pre-Compact Period. Though some migration to the U.S. occurred before the Compact's enactment, this agreement threw the doors wide open and Pohnpeians have increasingly flocked through them. As one man remarked to me during my 2016 visit to Pohnpei while we sat at the airport, “Every plane that leaves here is full, but the ones coming back are not.” In addition to financial aid paid from the U.S. government to the FSM, some of which filters down to Pohnpei, Pohnpeians themselves are increasingly directly entrenched in the U.S. economy through migration and indirectly through remittances. Their children born in the U.S. are joint U.S.-FSM citizens, though a new Pohnpeian law will require these children to elect at age 18 whether to retain FSM citizenship and abandon U.S. citizenship or vice versa. Despite enhanced mobility and deepened U.S. influence, Pohnpeians follow the same pattern of leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles regardless of place of residence. Migrants and those who remain on Pohnpei engage collectively in the Pohnpeian system which now incorporates money and foreign goods into both subsistence and prestige aspects of daily life (Hubbard 2013, 2016). The sociopolitical system encompasses all of these related aspects in the institution of chieftainship.

## **Chapter Three: Pohnpeian Chieftainship and Social Organization**

### **Pohnpeian Chieftainship**

Pohnpeian chieftainship is pervasive, extending direct influence into the lives of Pohnpeians. Virtually every household head in Pohnpei, plus their spouse, will hold some sort of title (Mauricio 1993:69). Conservative estimates indicate that over 4,000 male titles exist—plus companion female titles for most of these and still other female titles which often feature companion male titles—relative to 3,302 Pohnpeian households (Mauricio 1993:54). Most of these titles are section or the basic chiefdom-level titles versus paramount chiefdom-level titles.<sup>12</sup>

Not only is Pohnpeian chieftainship pervasive, it is all-inclusive. During my first return visit to Pohnpei in twenty years from July to August of 2014, four title-holding men explained to me that their title system and related customs—together with religion and government—bind Pohnpei together. This statement, with remarkably little variation, came in answer to my questions about the import of the title system in Pohnpei today. These three interrelated domains of experience—religious, sociocultural, and sociopolitical—have impacted and shaped the system of titles, and the daily lives of Pohnpeians, for as far back as people can recount or care to speculate about, and continue to do so to this day. The following sections discuss the system of titles, how it works today in Pohnpei in various domains of experience, as well as its history and the ideology that supports it. The main thrust of this work as a whole looks at chieftainship's implications for Pohnpeians today in the five different groups under consideration.

### **Paramount Chiefdom-level Titles**

Five paramount chiefdoms, also referred to as tribal districts, plus the town of Kolonia,

---

<sup>12</sup> Where the word chiefdom is unmarked, it implies section-level chiefdom. The higher-level chiefdom will always be marked by paramount preceding chiefdom.

comprise Pohnpei island today, with each of these six divisions recognized as municipalities of Pohnpei state. However, Kolonia does not factor into the division of Pohnpei into the five paramount chiefdoms, each headed by diarchic lines of chiefs. Diarchy, like monarchy, indicates the number of rulers of a political unit. For Pohnpeian paramount chiefdoms, two lines of titleholders, each headed by a chief, serve to organize the polities. Dozens of *kousapw* or sections constitute each tribal district. The paramount chief of each paramount chiefdom carries the title Nahnmwarki, and the Nahnken heads the parallel but lower-ranking line. Males hold the ranked titles, but each carries a companion title, so as many women hold titles and chiefly positions as men. At least since 1968 (Riesenberg 1968), twelve title holders comprised the upper echelon of each of the two lines in each tribal district, constituting a distinction from other titles, referred to as the path of titles (*ahlen mwahr*). Current reports indicate that the path of titles now includes the top sixteen of the approximately thirty paramount chiefdom-level titles in each line, but I was unable to elicit consistent information about which titles carry this top-sixteen distinction. Marked consistency exists within each chiefdom, and from one chiefdom to another, with respect to the top four titles of the Nahnmwarki line. This ranking appears to persist historically, at least back to the Spanish Era. Nahnmwarki, followed by Wasai, Dauk, and Noahs carry the most prestige and chiefly distinction (Cabez & Weyler 2012:101, my translation; Riesenberg 1968; Mauricio 1993:176-177).

One ideally moves up the path of titles when someone above vacates his position, generally due to death. Exogamous matrilineal clan membership generally determines eligibility for high titles in the Nahnmwarki and Nahnken lines (Riesenberg 1968:15). Ideally these requirements remain constant—and they generally have, especially for the Nahnmwarki line. For example, when I reached Pohnpei in July of 2014, the Nahnmwarki of Kitti had just passed



away. I found the people recovering from the loss of their leader but also from the weeks'-long funeral activities involving production of food, labor and materials for building the shrine, and other related efforts—coordinated primarily by section leaders for the benefit of the paramount chief's family. As far as the chieftainship itself was concerned, Nahnmwarki Gregario replaced Nahnmwarki Paul, both of the highest-ranking clan of Kittu, Dipwenmen, without incident.

The Nahnken line remains prestigious, but the rigor with which it ideally operated has slipped. According to multiple reports, the Nahnken lines have become “*pingada*” (confused). In Madolenihmw, the Dipwenwai (foreigner clan) and Lasialap (great eel) clans were to alternate the highest Nahnken title and occupy the lower titles within the line. Now several clans hold positions in the Nahnken path of titles, leading to the reported confusion. An elder Pohnpeian woman of Madolenihmw—daughter of a deceased Nahnmwarki—explained that the Nahnmwarki line's decreasing adherence to the rule of intermarriage with the appropriate clans eligible for the Nahnken line titles causes this confusion. This norm existed because the Nahnken line institutionalized a place of honor for children of the Nahnmwarki (Riesenberg 1968:14) and granted ownership of certain sections of land to the Nahnken—though the Nahnmwarki retained the majority of the land and control over recognizing sections and granting paramount chiefdom-level titles. After land ownership transferred to individuals, control over matrilineal titles remained with the Nahnmwarki. As I argue elsewhere (Hubbard 2013, 2016), whether the Nahnmwarki formally owns the land and controls titles or just maintains authority over titles, the result is the same—a degree of control over labor and the fruits thereof.

In addition to the approximately three-hundred titles the Nahnmwarki and Nahnken lines create across the five tribal districts of the Pohnpeian system, hundreds more *Mwahr Koanoat* (honorary titles) exist as well (Petersen 1982a:17-18; Shimizu 1987:145; Mauricio 1993:59;

Hubbard 2016). The Nahnmwarki can award these prestigious tribal-district titles to any man, and sometimes women, regardless of clanship—recall that companion titles existing for women, and sometimes men as well. Though the Nahnmwarki and Nahnken titles require specific clan membership for eligibility, people do not automatically rise to high office of any kind on Pohnpei simply incident to their birth, limiting the impact of ascription when present. With honorary titles, ascription does not apply, simply high achievement of virtually any kind, recognized by the Nahnmwarki.

While attending the memorial for Nahnei's mother on Pohnpei in 2014, I sat in a U-shaped tin-roofed *nahs* or feasthouse just outside the Catholic church in the Wene area of Kitti at a church administration council meeting. The Pohrasapw section chief's house and feasthouse lay a stone's throw away across the dirt road and down a well-worn path lined by banana and coconut trees and lush undergrowth. The official meeting attendees were all seasoned men, either representatives sent by their section chiefs or section chiefs themselves. Younger men, naked from the waist up, pounded kava and the reverberations of stone on stone filled the air. Two women clothed in floral dresses passed around red Kool-Aid mixed in used water bottles.

As the kava-pounding continued and others spoke around us, a high-ranking member of the Pohrasapw section—its chieftainship controlled by the Nahnmwarki's Dipwenmen clan—leaned toward me and spoke over the din. He told me that virtually all deacons in the Catholic Church and pastors (*Wahnpoaron*) in the Protestant Church receive important honorary titles. Further, a section chief of another Kitti section explained that, upon election, if they did not already have them, members of the Pohnpei state government and Pohnpeian representatives to the FSM government immediately receive high honorary titles. Another section chief whose constituents elected him to the Pohnpei state government confirmed this personally, indicating

the Nahnmwarki gave him an important honorary title right after his election. He further reported that some honorary titles now carry significant privileges allowing these title-holders to sit at the same level as the Nahnmwarki himself at important functions, reflecting their elevated rank.

Such titles are conferred by all five Nahnmwarkis and carry the most weight at paramount chiefdom-level functions by allowing the honorary title holders to, depending on rank, sit on or near the level of the Nahnmwarki and highest-ranking Nahnmwarki- and Nahnken-line title-holders. Such titles also increase the standing of the individual and his wife in their sections, entitling them to greater shares of food distributions at feasts. Sometimes the flow of influence goes both ways, allowing the section more influence with the Nahnmwarki as the honorary title-holder has as much, and sometimes more, contact with the Nahnmwarki as the section's chief. Further, because the honorary title-holder receives considerable prestige from the Nahnmwarki's title bestowal, he is beholden to the Nahnmwarki. Though I have not heard of egregious misuse of this power, people unanimously say that such arrangements reveal the cleverness of the Nahnmwarkis, implying the title recipients' obligation to provide at least a sympathetic ear—and possibly preferential treatment by the government via the elected officer—to the Nahnmwarki.

Pohnpeians view the Nahnmwarkis of the five paramount chiefdoms as being especially powerful. The word they use to describe that power is *manaman*, a cognate of the Polynesian *mana*, with similar implications (Firth 1940; Petersen 1985). As I understand it, *manaman* endows the bearer's actions with a sacred efficacy and makes his or her person holy. Pohnpeians refer to this latter concept under the term *sarawi* which they use both to describe their paramount chiefs, and sometimes other title holders, as well as religious figures, and the land upon which they live. Mauricio (1993:92) cites the indigenous oral historian Silten's correlation of *manaman*

“to the physical energy force of lightning.” Mauricio (1993:92) continues, “According to him, this force 'went into' or saturated Pohnpei and in part gives the island its *sarawi* and *manaman* (Silten n.d.:7).”

As this statement indicates, Pohnpeians say their land itself is holy (Hanlon 1988). Pohnpeian *tiahk* (customs), particularly pertaining to *tiahk en sapw* (customs of the land), and *tiahk en wahu* (customs of respect) guide them in their interactions with the land and with chiefs and title holders. Until the above-mentioned German land reforms of 1910, which transferred land ownership to residents to be passed on through patrilineal primogeniture, the matrilineal clans of the Nahnmwarki and Nahnken owned the land (Bascom 1948:212; Riesenberg 1968:29; Petersen 1982a:125-126). The residents occupied the land and owed tribute to the chiefs who represented these highest-ranked clans in the paramount chiefdoms. Settlement priority ideally ranked the clans in each tribal district, establishing rights to both land ownership and control of chiefly titles. Without control of land, chiefs now clearly influence their chiefdom members through control of titles (Petersen 1982a:23). Indeed, Riesenberg 1968:10) interpreted Nahnmwarki as “Lord of controlling titles,” a power which the Nahnmwarki exercises both directly at the paramount chiefdom level, and indirectly at the section level, to which we now turn.

### **Section-level Titles**

Each paramount chiefdom has several sections. These sections traditionally formed on land controlled by the Nahnmwarki and Nahnken due to their positions as heads of matrilineal clans which owned the land. With the shift to individual land ownership passing via patrilineal inheritance leading to an increasing impetus toward patrilocal residence, one would expect significant complications for ideally matrilineal sections to arise. However, the Nahnmwarki

continues to exercise control of titles and recognition of section status, such that he can establish section boundaries as he sees fit and award section chief status to whomever he deems worthy. Further, sibling sets continue to be related by matrilineal clan, such that, even assuming strict patrilocality and if they have the same mother, the siblings residing on the site will share matrilineal clanship. However, strict patrilocality does not exist and people have flexibility with regard to section membership such that one may belong to multiple sections simultaneously, including a section in which one does not reside. This fact is particularly true when one's relative, usually brother, father, uncle, or grandfather is a section chief, allowing one greater access to titles. Despite a draw toward retaining section chief status within the clan with which a section is associated, generally the individual displaying the most noteworthy leadership qualities will eventually be recognized as a section's chief.

Though the Nahnmwarki and Nahnken, as well as other high-ranking paramount chiefdom-level title holders, carry the most prestige, they depend almost entirely on the section chiefs to mobilize productivity and labor. As one section chief told me regarding the Nahnmwarki, “*Sohte [sepwilleme] aramas*”—“His Highness has no people;” the implication being that section chiefs do. Once the Nahnmwarki sanctions the section chief's position as leader of his section by awarding the associated title, the section chief (*soumas*) then controls the remaining titles at the section level and wields the influence that these positions carry—and section titles are much more numerous than paramount chiefdom-level titles. Another way of looking at this act of distributing titles is that the only way a section chief can establish his authority is to share it, marked by titles (Petersen 1982a:21).

Like the district-level Nahnken, sections feature a second line of chiefs referred to as *paliendahl* with executive responsibilities—referred to as executive chiefs. This repeating

principle of divided authority and responsibility reflects Pohnpeian preference for dispersed power to offset centralized authority (Petersen 1999:395; Petersen 2007:327-328). Though the executive chief ideally handles many of the section's more instrumental functions, this position is also a well-respected chiefly office and title-holders under him ideally answer to him.

Based on a literal translation, the Pohnpeian term *kousapw*, generally glossed as section, means “land built up,” reflecting the effort that people put into converting the land into something that supports people (Petersen 1982a; Hubbard 2016). Using the word section describes well how most of these sociopolitical units function in practice. Geographically, they generally form wedges of land, broader at the coast of the pentagonal Pohnpeian island, and narrower as they approach the interior (Riesenberg 1968:22). There are exceptions to this norm of course, but typically this shape allows section members access to both marine and land resources of differing contours, soil types, and plant resources, making each section ideally a materially self-sufficient sociopolitical unit. Especially when sections reach sufficient size or have enough internal conflict to split, the individual farmsteads that comprise the section can lead to a gerrymandered appearance (Petersen 1982a:45). However, Petersen (1982a:87) “sensed a strain towards territorial integrity” that tends to counterbalance peoples' ability to align themselves in sections regardless of residential location, reflecting the principle of mobility noted above.

People related by blood and marriage generally populate the farmsteads that affiliate in each section. Indeed, when I attended the yam first-fruits feast held by the Pohrasapw section of Pohnpei in August of 2014, the section chief indicated the assembled group and told me, “These are all my descendants and their spouses.” He related they have one of the smaller sections with just over 100 members, and a number of non-family section members were not present at that

particular feast. Petersen (1982a:130) pegs the upper limit of section size at 300 members. The upshot of all this is that, although sections initially appear as minor chiefdoms with top-down sanction of the senior member of the ranking matrilineal clan, on the ground they look more like kinship groups headed by a competent, mature male member of the largest family of the dominant clan in the group. As Petersen (1982a) documented and Riesenberg (1968) reasoned, these sections go in and out of existence, often with new sections resurrecting previous section names and histories.

Section organization pervades Pohnpei. Though they likely exist, I do not know of anyone who lives on Pohnpei who does not claim affiliation with some section. Even those Kolonia residents I have met who do not have land outside of Kolonia that ties them directly to a section consider themselves members of one of their relatives' sections. In 1968, Saul Riesenberg (1968:23-28) reported Madolenihmw had 28 sections, Uh 15, Kitti 37, Nett 23, and Sokehs 22. Based on information I obtained in August of 2014, as of 2006, Madolenihmw had as many as 45 sections, Uh 26, Kitti 41, Nett 23, and Sokehs 23. Given Riesenberg (1968:5) estimated the 1963 population of Pohnpei at 10,000 and the current population is at least three times that figure, the proliferation of sections in Madolenihmw, Uh, and Kitti is not surprising. In fact, one might, by extrapolation, expect there to be more. However, assuming a 2006 population of 30,000 and the combined number of sections to be the reported 158, we get an average section population of 189 persons, within the 100 to 300 range established by Petersen's and my sources.

Though some section chief titles remain fairly consistent through time, they may change. For example, Riesenberg's (1968:25) report indicates Pohrasapw's section chief's title was Ounwene en Pohrasapw. By 2006, this title had changed to Soulik en Pohrasapw. This title remained unchanged in 2014—as one would expect given the same man held the office.

Riesenberg does not record the Pohrasapw executive chief's title, but in 2006, reports indicate Kanikihnloang designated this office. By 2014, Souwen Pohrasapw replaced this previous title. A high-ranking Pohrasapw member explained that sometimes the Nahnmwarki will change the title when a new title-holder becomes section chief for his own reasons, and other times the person promoted is so identified with their previous title that the title advances with the person, with the Nahnmwarki's acquiescence. My sense is that changes are more common with the executive chief titles because the section chief awards these and he will be more sensitive to the local considerations than a Nahnmwarki might, and titular stability in the section chief line is more important than that of the lower-ranking, less symbolically important, executive chief.

Many daily activities Pohnpeians engage in occur within the realm of section. People tend gardens of yams, taro, and bananas, harvest food, fish, tend pigs, and look after their kava plants less for daily consumption, though that is of course a concern, but more so in anticipation of upcoming feasts. Interactions with friends and relatives span the personal and productive as most relatives hold titles in the same section or sections. Strong interpersonal relationships and shared activities make for strong sections, a characteristic that becomes clear during the many competitive feasts (Bascom 1948; Riesenberg 1968:32). Redistribution of the goods raised remains a core feature of feasts even as it was in the past (Petersen 1984:120; Shimizu 1987:129) with shares of the redistributed items corresponding to rank marked by titles (Petersen 1982a:21). Production, service, redistribution, and recognition occur primarily at the section level. If each of the 158 sections reported in 2006 averaged 15 titles per line, this would equate to 4,740 possible male section titles on Pohnpei, plus a like number of companion female titles. Titles are not given out willy-nilly though. As one section chief says, "Sweat makes a title;" titles require prolonged service to the community.



Section activities involve more than just economic productivity and titles, however. For example, the yam feast for the section chief of Pohrasapw I attended in 2014 included announcements pertaining to upcoming elections and political issues, with one of the members rallying support among his kin group for a particular candidate. Further, one of my hosts remained at church after the Sunday services as a representative of his section on the church council. The baptism of two of my adoptive family members occurred in a section chief's feast house, himself also a deacon in the Catholic Church. The feast recognizing the visiting Kosraean basketball team included representatives from no fewer than four sections who were specifically recognized for their participation in the event. The evening of my arrival featured a section activity awarding a new title. Two evenings entailed activities for a funeral that occurred in the Rohi section. The culminating event of my stay was a one-year memorial commemorating the passing of a section chief's mother. His family had spent the previous week, and particularly the two days prior to the event, preparing for the feast. Family members in Kansas City sent cash to support the purchase of rice, soft drinks, and other store-bought items. These experiences emphasize the centrality of sections integrating various domains of experience—yes, the religious, sociocultural, and sociopolitical, but also those of economic production and recognition of life events, birth and death, competition and cooperation.

Petersen (1999:402) found the section to be the basic building-block of Pohnpeian society, referring to them elsewhere (Petersen 1982a:18) as “the fundamental units of [Pohnpeian] communal life.” Mauricio (1993:1) traced the ideological bases of power found in Pohnpeian chieftainship through millennia of alternating centralization and decentralization. He asserted that initially nine dispersed polities based on matrilineal clanship (see also Petersen 1979:27), led by priest-chiefs and their title-holders emerged on Pohnpei. These polities were

subsumed by the Saudeleur dynasty between 800 CE and 1500 CE only to reemerge with the more dispersed Nahnmwarki form of organization in the 1500s (Mauricio 1993). Somewhat surprisingly, given his focus throughout his analysis on religious ideology that gave way to political rights of rulers, he concluded that sections—or something like them—have always been, and remain today, the enduring basis of Pohnpeian society (Mauricio 1993:349). He recognized the roles of the equivalent of section chiefs in the overthrow of the Saudeleurs (Mauricio 1993:350) leaving behind “core communities that were [sic] in some cases existed before and after [the Saudeleur empire's] downfall” (Mauricio 1993:350). In other words, priest-kings, Saudeleur tyrants, and Nahnmwarkis may come and go, but sections—land-holding groups marked by matrilineally controlled titles—will remain, with their own sacred charters intact through ancestral spirits and historical occupation of the sacred land, used by families as places of residence for subsistence, tribute, and identity tied to place and title (Petersen 1982a:139).

In addition to building up land to make it economically productive, sections likewise constitute many of the most important place names in Pohnpei. Indeed, these places endure through the various political regimes that have governed Pohnpei over time. When asking someone from Pohnpei where they are from specifically, often their section's name comes to the fore. Sections create most of the place names on Pohnpei and they also give rise to most of the titles on Pohnpei (Petersen 1982a:137). People become synonymous with their titles, which rank people in Pohnpeian society. Titles are not permanent and people can lose them for reasons such as repeatedly failing to perform obligations, being on the wrong side of a political controversy, or simply being related to someone who has fallen out of favor with a chief. Some men have been known to cry when they were stripped of their titles; it is as if they were being stripped of their identity, which indeed they were in important ways (Petersen 1982a:133). This power over titles

gives section chiefs immense influence in peoples' lives, and, as has been mentioned, provides them the opportunity to extend their power and authority by sharing it through distributing titles.

### **Pohnpeian Social Organization in General**

Hanlon (1988:199) observed that relationships with outsiders affected—but did not fundamentally change—the Pohnpeian social system that was established early on in its existence, possibly from its earliest colonizing voyage. Social organization persists in a linkage involving leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles most typically found in sections. Whether in the Era of Building, the Saudeleur Era, or the Nahnmwarki Era, or on into the Spanish, German, Japanese, American Eras, and even the Post-Compact period, this linkage structures Pohnpeian social organization and group function. This pattern readily adapts to a variety of circumstances and diverse places where Pohnpeians live and make a living.

Pohnpeian patterns of social organization indicate three primary factors, with all three structured and supported by chieftainship, arising in the context of the leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles context. These aspects include group membership, residence, and cooperative effort. Group membership entails birthplace and family connections, while mobility and flexibility impinge upon residence, and cooperative effort is complicated by multiple group memberships and competition.

#### *Notions of Belonging: Native-membership and Participant-membership*

The two levels of chieftainship—paramount and section—impact the primary Pohnpeian identity categories, leading to the two commonly used terms which cover group membership, *mehn* and *tohn*. Based on my own experience and with reference to Sohl, Rehg, and Andreas (2017) for confirmation, I translate *mehn* as “thing of” or “one of” and *tohn* as “member of” a given unit of social or political organization tied to place. Though it has specific uses, *mehn* is a

sort of default marker so its use can be a bit challenging to delineate. However, *mehn* is often used to differentiate one person in relation to another, identifying their paramount chiefdom membership.

The important takeaway for present purposes is not the nuanced uses of the word *mehn*, but rather its contrast with the word *tohn*. Whereas *mehn* implies origins or essential qualities, *tohn* connotes voluntary affiliation and often requires active engagement to maintain membership status. *Mehn* attaches at the level of being. *Tohn* speaks to participation. Both are important aspects of Pohnpeian communities as I understand them—with the first affirming fundamental belonging and the second marking commitment to the group. Said another way, *mehn* is something you are; *tohn* requires you to *do* things within a recognized group over time in a cooperative, coordinated manner.

Pohnpeians use *mehn* to describe broadly where someone is from, sometimes even if they were not literally born there, a use akin to ethnic identity or tribal membership such as *mehn Kitti* or *mehn Wai*, a Kitti person or an American, respectively. They might say someone is one of this land (*mehn sapw wet*), but Kitti people are born in the United States and Americans born while living in Kitti, and people can attain a sort of honorary *mehn* status by long-term residence and participation in groups as *tohn*.<sup>13</sup> Though both the United States and Kitti rank as higher-level social aggregations and not the more basic unit we pursue, Pohnpeians group people with reference place, often relying on territory as the default marker to identify group belonging. From here on, I will generally use “native-member” to stand in for *mehn*, and “participant-member” for *tohn*, indicating some of their basic differences.

---

<sup>13</sup> A distinction is still made between someone born to a place and one who achieves honorary status. One born to a place is *udahn pwilidak* (a true native, indigenous), the distinction with *mehn* and the modifier *udahn* (true) necessary due to the flexibility of the *mehn* marker.

## *Group Cohesion*

The Pohnpeian word *minimin*, suggesting “group cohesion,” generally applies to recognized social groups.<sup>14</sup> Its applicability differentiates between a fully functioning unit and one in distress, or just a bunch of people or subgroups living in proximity to one another. In other words, if people say that a group has or is *minimin*, they are conveying it functions well as a unit, that there are positive feelings within that group, and that the members cohere as a community. If a group lacks *minimin*, they seldom engage in cooperative events and may not remain a recognizable group much longer. People who share a common native-member identity are only said to have group cohesion if they are likewise participant-members of a particular group. So, *minimin* aligns with participant-membership but not necessarily with native-membership. These aspects of participant-membership, native-membership, and group cohesion arise within the context of the leadership-family-place-production-chieftdom-titles constellation of factors and likewise influence its application and efficacy.

## **The Six Linked Factors: Leadership-Family-Place-Production-Chieftdom-Titles**

### *Leadership*

In general, Pohnpeian social groups form as an enterprising individual ventures into territory unoccupied by Pohnpeians. Historically, this prototypical process took place in the form of identification of potentially productive farm ground. An enterprising individual would begin

---

14 This concept of group cohesion brings to mind Durkheim's solidarity, which applies in this case as well—both in its mechanical and organic aspects. Frank Young (1999:5) relied on Durkheim even as he followed Selznick's (1996:195) definition of community: “A group is a community to the extent it encompasses a broad range of activities and interests, and to the extent that participation implicates whole persons rather than segmental interests or activities.” Though this approach yields possible community units as small as the nuclear family and as large as the nation, it excludes those population units “by common agreement” (Young 1999:5). Young noted all communities have a territorial base. Applying a Durkheimian schema to community, Young emphasized the structural characteristics of differentiation, pluralism, and solidarity. He defined differentiation as essentially an updated organic solidarity involving complementary economic functions of community members and institutions while noting pluralism suggests the degree of member participation in the political process within the unit. Solidarity implies shared ideology, the ability to mobilize people behind beliefs (Young 1999:9).

clearing and cultivating. If he possessed leadership qualities, he would draw consanguineal and affinal kin to him to enhance his labor pool. Often these individuals would share native-member identity and, over time, a sense of group cohesion and participant-membership would emerge. In present times, this process can still happen in rural Pohnpei and its analog occurs in other locations such as Kolonia and in the U.S. sphere, particularly in Guam, Hawai'i, and the continental U.S. With reference to Pohrasapw in rural Pohnpei as a base case and Kolonia as an example of a Pohnpeian town, this research focuses on Cincinnati, Kansas City, and the U.S.-Madolenihmw section as relatively new social groups in the U.S. context. The analog for historical Pohnpeian social group formation found in the U.S. entails location not of productive farm ground, but location of economic opportunities in the form of jobs. In both cases, leadership mobilizes cooperative labor, primarily accessed through family networks.

### *Family*

As is common across societies (Brown 1991; Aries 1965), the basic Pohnpeian social unit is the family (Cabez & Weyler 2012; Mauricio 1993). Though the nuclear family has become increasingly important in Pohnpeian society, the extended family remains a crucial resource for Pohnpeians—and a locus of obligations. Thus, despite the changes thrust upon it by Christianity and the Western—now global—economy, the Pohnpeian family clings to a more “traditional” configuration, emphasizing extended family and community (Aries 1977:227). Whether the distant past (Bernart 1977; Mauricio 1993), the more recent past (Cabez & Weyler 2012; Riesenberg 1968; Petersen 1982a), or the present (Falgout 2012; Hubbard 2016), we see the pattern of the importance of family, flexibly defined, to Pohnpeians (Petersen 2009).

### *Place*

Place relates the geographical and ecological relevance of a location within a cultural

system. Within this context, groups of people form, while occupying a place and creating an economic relationship with it in the bargain. In Pohnpei, place obtains participant-member group recognition in the sociopolitical system as a section. For Pohnpeians, maybe the best marker of belonging is to be referred to as *tohn aht wasa* or “a member of our place.” The basic identifier for an outsider is *tohn ekis wasa* or “a member of another place.” As with many other groups (Cohen 2001:12), and maybe all groups (Brown 1991:107), Pohnpeians use this in/out, us/them distinction to build their concept of belonging, though these notions of belonging may be flexible and situational (Cohen 2001:12-13). For Pohnpeians, these group identifiers almost always include a reference to place.

### *Production*

A leader mobilizes his family to produce economic goods and value available within the group's territory.<sup>15, 16</sup> Traditionally these were subsistence items such as breadfruit, taro, yams, and fish. Currently, subsistence production continues in rural Pohnpei, supplemented by wage labor. But in Kolonia and the U.S. sphere, localized production occurs strictly through wage labor, with proceeds used to purchase necessary goods. Excess production and labor were traditionally rendered to chiefs as tribute. This pattern continues even in wage labor situations with money contributed directly to chiefs or converted by family members to goods which are then passed to chiefs at feasts.

---

15 A leader's family includes spouse, dependents, siblings, parents, and affines. Again, this configuration is not unique to Pohnpei but follows a pattern found in many societies, certainly in other oceanic societies (e.g., Aries 1977:228; Firth 1960; 1966; Kihleng 1996; Bodley 2011; Kirch 2002).

16 I consistently reference the male pronoun in this discussion of group formation because in all cases of which I am aware a male takes the steps to claim and clear new territory and is the public face of the group. That is not to downplay the role of women in the process, but rather to focus on the way the pattern revealed itself to me. However, Kimberlee Kihleng (1996:81) asserts that, at least in the Saladak area of Uh, women led efforts at community and farmstead establishment and related ongoing work. Even now, in performing group activities, women take on a central role in the behind-the-scenes function and receive recognition for their efforts and inherent worth, almost always paid respect to by their titles in public speeches. Women themselves sometimes participate in speechmaking and presentation of goods at feasts, giving an added glimpse into their crucial efforts.

### *Chieftdom*

As a paramount chief comes to recognize a particular group for its productivity, he will often formalize it as a section, one of several lower-level chiefdoms within one of the five paramount chiefdoms. In such cases, section-level chiefdom applies, with the section name marking the group and the place they occupy. Section recognition and incorporation into the institution of chieftainship solidifies the group's existence in the sociopolitical realm. Along with section status comes the naming of an individual as chief. The section chief is usually the leader of the family unit mobilizing the group's productive efforts, drawing from the resources available from place they inhabit.

### *Titles*

Titles implicate, and are derived from, native-member paramount chiefdoms and participant-member sections. In both cases, titles stem from the leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles connection but this application focuses on the implication of title assignment within a localized group by its leader. The leader is typically a family head of a productive group of people occupying a place as he mobilizes their efforts to generate subsistence and tribute. The title-granting authority comes with the group's recognition as a section and with the office of section chief being conferred on its leader. This formal step allows the leader to invest individuals and their households with titles which recognize and proclaim their social worth. As Petersen (1982a) noted, a chief exercises his authority by sharing his authority in the form of titles. By conferring titles on individuals in a localized group, a chief solidifies that group and enhances his influence over the group and the individuals who comprise it.



## Overview of Pohnpeian Social Organization

Pohnpeians find cooperative production providing necessary resources to be a hallmark of basic social units. However, these activities find additional elaboration among Pohnpeians as local production easily exceeds subsistence needs and takes on enhanced meaning as they use it for tribute at feasts (Petersen 1982a; Shimizu 1987; Hubbard 2016). Intermarrying families comprise residential and productive groups, often initiated by a cooperating sibling set, and identified as relatives through the kinship terms of *peneinei*, *keinek*, and *sou* (family, lineage, and clan). Though certainly not all family, lineage, and clan members reside in close proximity, those who do live close to one another often share these relationships. These groups may attract additional members and increase in size ultimately forming sections, the basic supra-familial unit seldom exceeding a few hundred people (Petersen 1982a:130).

A group such as a section is typically that unit which organizes labor to generate tribute, claiming whole persons rather than their sporadic, situational participation, such as church on Wednesday nights and Sunday mornings. Sections place daily demands upon their members in the forms of subsistence production and participation in section activities—some scheduled, such as feasts, and others ad hoc, such as funerals. Despite being a member of a basic population unit such as a section, challenges to the group can arise. For instance, if subgroups placing significant demands for labor or loyalty on group members exist within a Pohnpeian social unit, cohesion (*minimin*) may be diminishing. The group may be moving, or have moved, beyond the basic unit level, possibly heading for a split, such as Petersen (1982a) observed in the Upper Awak section.<sup>17</sup>

Such lower-level productive Pohnpeian units generally obtain the status of section—

---

<sup>17</sup> A similar segmentation mechanism exists within, for example, Hutterite communities where when community size and/or internal strife reaches challenging levels and cohesion breaks down, the group fissions (Robbins 2012:292).

conferred by higher-level paramount chiefs (Riesenberg 1968; Petersen 1982a; Hubbard 2016). Coincident with labor and loyalty, the basic unit of Pohnpeian social organization typically features leaders whose chiefly titles relate to their status within their community. Other group members will also have titles marking their rank within the group and relate them to other groups through the higher-level sociopolitical organization.

Pohnpeians define social groups with reference to place (Hubbard 2013, 2016), implying territory plus group-created meaning as Pohnpeians use ecological and social resources for economic production and social organization. Among other factors, Pohnpeian social groups feature family, economic activity, and leadership based on rank with reference to place. Social group production and place construction depend upon a level of group cohesion (*minimin*) most commonly found in Pohnpeian sections. As Petersen (1982a) pointed out, the word *kousapw*, which we gloss as “section,” means to make a land, to build a place through cooperative effort organized and led by chiefs, ultimately generating a cohesive social unit in the bargain, often marked by sections. These population units feature cooperative effort in deriving subsistence from available resources, tribute-raising activities, a familial basis, unit population of between 100 and 300 persons, group-level cohesion as the minimal supra-familial unit, and shared participant-member status of a section headed by a chief and ordered by ranked titles. This process reveals the underlying linked factors of leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles which structure Pohnpeian social organization. Taking this information as background, the following chapter discusses five contemporary Pohnpeian population units.

## **Chapter Four: Five Pohnpeian Population Aggregates—An Overview**

### **Introduction—The Five Groups**

This dissertation considers five Pohnpeian groups which feature differing degrees of similarities and differences. They each reveal varying continuities of Pohnpeian cultural principles and social institutions and applications of principles and institutions acquired through interaction with Americans. This chapter first explains each of the five population units in entirely descriptive terms, then analyzes some key aspects of each for comparative purposes.

### **Pohrasapw, Kitti**

For purposes of this dissertation, the Pohrasapw section in the Kitti paramount chiefdom serves as the base case of Pohnpeian social organization. Geographically, Pohrasapw lies toward the eastern end of Kitti along the coastal plain of the Wene valley. The average Pohnpeian section size is about 150 members, placing Pohrasapw on the small side of average, with its approximately 50 participating members and as many as 100 total members. Pohrasapw displays a number of typical Pohnpeian organizational features. Its section chief comes from the Dipwenmen clan, which is also the Kitti paramount chief's clan. This characteristic pattern follows the paramounts' tendency to entrust clan and lineage members with oversight of their land in pre-German times, and with administration of titles before and since (Riesenberg 1968; Petersen 1982a). As discussed elsewhere (Petersen 1982a; Hubbard 2016), either logic results in a similar outcome—chiefly influence over social rank and prestige and access to tribute.

Though ideally coterminous with residence on specific farmsteads in the home territory, section membership in Pohrasapw reaches beyond its physical markers.<sup>18</sup> For example, the second-ranking member of the Pohrasapw section chief line lived for an extended period at his

---

18 See also Petersen (1982a) for examples in the Awak sections of the Uh paramount chiefdom.

wife's residence in the Rohi section, geographically separated from Pohrasapw. Other Pohrasapw section members live elsewhere, such as Kolonia and Kansas City, participating in section activities periodically and at a distance. These relative levels of involvement in, and geographical distance from, Pohrasapw differ markedly but all section members retain membership status, despite physical separation of person from section as a geographic unit.

Pohrasapw aggregates with other Kittu sections to form the paramount chiefdom of Kittu itself, with the same pattern repeated in other paramount chiefdoms. Previously more flexible, paramount chiefdom boundary lines became fixed under German rule and the resulting land reforms, which removed land ownership from the hands of the paramount and secular chiefs (Petersen 1982a:116; Riesenberger 1968). This mandate limited the ability of individual farmsteads to switch section affiliation outside paramount chiefdom borders and eliminated the possibility of borderland sections to switch paramount chiefdom allegiance, though it remains unclear how often such maneuvers occurred historically. What this fixation of paramount chiefdom borders did not change, however, is the ability of people to establish and maintain section membership without physically living within the section's, or paramount chiefdom's, geographical bounds. This pattern of mobility and flexibility with regard to residence and section membership—which do not necessarily coincide—continues.

As mentioned above, clan, lineage and sublineage membership influence eligibility for titles, particularly high titles at the paramount chiefdom level, but also options for ascension to section chief in particular sections. Nuclear and extended families tend to constitute the preponderance of a given section's membership—in no small part due to the understanding that a given title belongs to a family rather than the individual recognized as its holder (Petersen 1982:145). Pohrasapw emblemizes this principle as the section chief's nuclear and extended

family and affines comprise the core of the section. Paraphrasing Petersen (1982a:21), a chief establishes his authority by sharing his authority in the form of titles, a pattern borne out in Pohrasapw.

In Pohrasapw, people subsist through a combination of traditional crop cultivation, fishing, wage labor, and, for the section chief himself, a government stipend. This stipend derives from his automatic membership in the *Pwihn en Wahu*, which glosses as group of honor, a sort of House of Lords mandated by the Kitti constitution. Though traditional crops remain plentiful, the preference for store-bought goods and the costs of paying for electricity and mechanized transportation—cars, taxis, and buses—necessitate some access to money.

Pohrasapw—as with Seinwar, Soun Kiroun, Olepel, Pos, and several other sections—belongs to the broader Wene region of Kitti. Taken as a whole, the Kitti sections, in many ways similar to Pohrasapw, comprise and constitute the Kitti paramount chiefdom. The same general pattern applies to Madolenihmw, Uh, Nett, and Sokehs which together with Kitti form the primary traditional sociopolitical divisions of Pohnpei island. The Pohnpei state divides the island proper into six municipalities with Madolenihmw, Uh, Kitti, and Sokehs coterminous with their traditional sociopolitical boundaries and Nett nearly so. The sixth division, Kolonia, annexes portions of Nett.

### **Kolonia, Pohnpei**

In 1887 the Spanish government established an administrative center they named Santiago de la Ascencion on a plot of land called Niahlek on the Mesenieng peninsula in the north of Pohnpei in the Nett paramount chiefdom (Hanlon 1988:149-150). The Spaniards referred to their settlement as “la Colonia” in their administrative reports (Hanlon 1988:149-150). From the establishment of “la Colonia” onward, this area of Mesenieng would remain the

focus of colonial administrations and governments. Though today Palikir in Sokehs hosts the national government of the FSM, the Pohnpei state government resides in Kolonia.

Presently Kolonia includes a diverse population from other islands and various nationalities. Pohnpeians predominate but coexist with multiple other groups with varying languages and norms. Wage labor accessed through family connections predominates in Kolonia with Pohnpeians retaining connections with the paramount chiefdoms as a form of primary identity, and sections for participation in traditional activities and access to titles. Though Kolonia exists as a municipality on par with the five paramount chiefdoms in Pohnpei state, it differs completely from the five paramountcies as it has no chiefs, no titleholders, and no sections as a subset of its polity, nor the traditional activities which support these sociopolitical units. But for Kolonia, these municipalities reflect the traditional sociopolitical divisions of Pohnpei island. The apparent exceptions within Kolonia—at least one section, Metipw, lies squarely within its geographical borders—accommodate themselves to the traditional system through the Nett paramount chiefdom, not Kolonia which, as municipality only, has no sections.

By 2010 the population of Kolonia stood at about 6,100 compared to around 6,200 in 1985, though populations in nearby Nett and Sokehs increased by 2,500 and 1,500 persons respectively during that timeframe (FSM 2010). Kolonia overlays primarily the Mesenieng area of what was Nett, but extends beyond as well. People typically own or rent small parcels of land, often building partially tin-sheathed structures on relatives' property as they live in Kolonia in order to work as wage laborers. Not infrequently, Kolonia residents also maintain farmsteads “*nan wehi*,” or in the paramount chiefdoms. This expression has a similar ring to it as our own “in the country.” As such, many Kolonia residents maintain either co-residence in a section in the country or continue section affiliation with their sections of origin or that of a relative. Though

some access to wage labor is available in the chiefdoms through municipal offices, schools, and a few other types of commercial ventures, the vast majority of exchanges of money for labor on Pohnpei occur in Kolonia. In addition to the state government offices, Kolonia includes other concerns such as: hardware stores, grocery stores, car rentals, hotels, computer services, telecommunications services, the post office, and sea and airports.

During my residence in Kolonia in 1993 and 1994, every Pohnpeian I met there claimed paramount chiefdom membership despite living in Kolonia all or part of the time. In some cases those who maintained dual residence invited us to events in their home sections in, for instance, Uh, Madolenihmw, and Kitti. Whether these people lived full- or part-time in Kolonia, they invariably claimed membership in one of the paramount chiefdoms and virtually always in a specific section. The same pattern holds true for one-time Kolonia residents who migrate to the United States. One man in his late thirties who lived his whole pre-migration life in Kolonia claims Kitti paramount chiefdom native-membership and another man in his late fifties who worked most of his pre-migration adult life in Kolonia claims Uh affiliation.

The Kolonia area's cosmopolitan composition complicates its predominantly Pohnpeian character. Australians, Chinese, Japanese, North Americans, and Filipinos own prominent businesses. Large groups from the islands of Ngatik and Kapingamarangi occupy significant portions of Kolonia territory, consistent with Pohnpeians' history of providing quarters to outer-islanders. In the shadow of Sokehs Rock adjacent to Kolonia, a coastal area hosts a large community of Pinglapese. Clusters and even a dedicated village of outer islanders exist in the paramount chiefdoms. These people do not typically participate in section-related activities and retain their outer-island identity, often predominantly speaking their outer-island languages, as do outer-islanders living in Kolonia. Though Pohnpeian remains the lingua franca of these diverse

communities, they sometimes speak English in many contexts, such as in the regular flow of life at work, during kava drinking, even at home, and during speeches in churches, political campaigns, and at feasts. Further, the FSM adopted English as its official language, facilitating communication between its member states and, now, with second-, and even third-generation Pohnpeians living in the United States who often predominantly—and sometimes exclusively—speak English. Two examples of places featuring Pohnpeians who speak English even more, and are more enmeshed in wage-labor economies, follow.

### **Cincinnati Metropolitan Area**

The Cincinnati metro area includes Cincinnati, Ohio and several urban and suburban cities in both southwestern Ohio and northern Kentucky—principally but not exclusively Florence, Kentucky. Reports indicate Pohnpeians began migrating to Cincinnati by the 1980s in pursuit of education and employment opportunities. Though residents come from all five paramount chiefdoms, estimates place the proportions of the approximately 800 Pohnpeians in Cincinnati at 35% Nett, 35% Uh, 20% Sokehs, and the remaining 10% split between Madolenihmw and Kitti.

A few families own their homes, but most rent apartments or single- or multi-family dwellings close to their places of employment. People refer to the area where one prominent community member and his family reside as “Kolonia,” a place I will refer to as “Little Kolonia.” Pohnpeians in Cincinnati, particularly those in the northern suburbs, hold some gatherings in this location and I understand this man arrived early on the Cincinnati scene relative to other Pohnpeians.

The most densely populated cluster of Pohnpeians in Cincinnati live in an area I will call “Summit Heights,” near the Little Kolonia area, but seen as a distinct place. As many as a third



of the Pohnpeians in Cincinnati may live in this locale, with the balance of the Cincinnati population spread throughout the metro area. Some clusters of Pohnpeians form in apartment complexes or other residential areas surrounding places of employment in a pattern similar to Summit Heights but featuring fewer people and reduced density.

Whether in apartments or houses of various configurations, all but one of the dozen or so families I visited hosted friends and extended family members beyond their nuclear family. Most households include long-term visitors or permanent co-residents from Pohnpei, typically their parents or siblings. Sisters visiting from Pohnpei most often did so to serve as babysitters and domestic help to free both young parents to work and maximize their access to wage labor. This arrangement increases remittances to family on Pohnpei, allowing multiple siblings the ability to contribute to supporting parents whether working directly in the American economy or not, typically by providing this crucially important domestic labor.<sup>19</sup>

Pohnpeians in Cincinnati find employment in food service, retail, elder care, and, most frequently, manufacturing. In fact, many Pohnpeians work in a manufacturing facility near the Summit Heights area, a factor they use to explain their tendency to live in relatively large numbers there. Whether in Summit Heights or elsewhere in Cincinnati, the characteristic Pohnpeian pattern of extended family residence obtains, often complemented by visiting parents, siblings, or extended kin from Pohnpei.

While Pohnpeians in Cincinnati interact with any number of other North American residents, that engagement generally ends with work or school. Other Pohnpeians constitute the vast majority of their social universes. This limitation facilitates reliance on norms and standards

---

<sup>19</sup> This labor is important in many ways. The most obvious is that it frees up those qualified to work in the U.S. by my means of experience to earn for the benefit of the family—both in the U.S. and on Pohnpei. Further, these family members' life experience, language, culture, habits, mannerisms, and so forth, tend to be shaped on Pohnpei. With their typical focus on care and socialization of young children, this pattern helps to transmit to, and instill in, U.S.-born generations some sense of Pohnpeian-ness (Hubbard 2016).

learned on, or derived from, those established on Pohnpei, reinforced by habit and influence of visiting siblings and parents from the island.

As with those living in Kolonia, Pohnpei, all Pohnpeians living in Cincinnati readily relate their paramount chiefdom membership, and most quickly identify which section to which they belong. Though older residents and those of particularly high-ranking families bring often prestigious titles with them, fewer among the 20- to 40-year-old cohort lay claim to a title. With the visit of a Kittu section chief and, of greater import and impact, the Sokehs paramount chief, this dynamic has begun to change. The Kittu section chief assigned a handful of his section-level titles to primarily Kittu men and women living in Cincinnati. Beginning in 2015, the Sokehs paramount chief began assigning dozens of paramount chiefdom-level titles to men and women in the Summit Heights area regardless of their paramount chiefdom membership. While the practice of assigning paramount chiefdom titles to non-native members is not uncommon on Pohnpei, it does not happen as frequently as intra-paramount chiefdom title assignment.

Assigning paramount chiefdom titles to most members of a localized group does not occur on Pohnpei. This practice is reserved for section organization and section titles. No sections exist in Cincinnati, however, and people do not relate it as being affiliated with any of the paramount chiefdoms, nor do they identify it broadly as being a Pohnpeian place, despite the naming of a discrete area after Kolonia.

### **Kansas City Metropolitan Area**

The Kansas City metro encompasses both Kansas City, Missouri and Kansas City, Kansas, as well as many suburbs on both sides of the state line. Pohnpeians reportedly began moving to the Kansas City area as early as the 1970s (Hezel 2001:150; Hubbard 2013; Hubbard 2016). Education funded by grants and scholarships initially drew them to Kansas City, but as

they gained access to wage labor, many one-time students exchanged college education, with uncertain returns—jobs in Pohnpei were in short supply—for full-time jobs in Kansas City with immediate and predictable rewards.

After four-plus decades of migration, with intensification occurring in the mid-1990s, the Pohnpeian population in Kansas City sits at over 1,000 persons. Community members indicate slightly more than 40% come from Kitti, a bit less than 40% from Madolenihmw, with 10% from Uh, and 5% each from Nett and Sokehs rounding out the configuration.

A fair number of families own their own homes, but most rent apartments or single-family residences. When Pohnpeians in Kansas City find an apartment complex that is “Micro-friendly,” they tend to move there in waves such that pockets of families congregate—drawn by consanguineal and affinal kinship. Though many Pohnpeians live in a particular neighborhood along a numbered street in Kansas City near Gladstone, a place they refer to as “On Sixty-seventh,” other groups cluster in different parts of the metro such as Raytown, Overland Park, and the eastern suburbs.

Similar in nuclear and extended family-based composition to those in Cincinnati, many Kansas City households include visitors from Pohnpei, often parents or siblings, and sometimes dignitaries from either the government or chiefdoms. Some family members come to assist with caring for children or aging parents, while others seek medical care. One man's niece recently visited to assist with domestic chores, as his wife passed away and his household members all work full-time. The young woman's presence allows the others to more fully participate in community functions once they complete work responsibilities.

Most Pohnpeians in Kansas City tend to find employment in food service, with some in retail, manufacturing, warehousing, and elder care. Food service, however, remains most

common with strong historical connections in three Japanese steakhouses, and a nearly pervasive presence in that particular type of restaurant throughout the city. With a preponderance of Pohnpeians working in Japanese steakhouses that feature late hours, family and community schedules skew toward late-night, into-the-morning, activities. The nature of food service, however, synchronizes well with the family and cooperative community orientation Pohnpeian traditional life cultivates.

North American residents of many backgrounds feature prominently in the lives of Pohnpeians as customers, coworkers, and bosses, but that engagement does not typically extend beyond work or school. The social universes of Pohnpeians in Kansas City generally consist in interactions with other Pohnpeians. Thus, they rely heavily on norms and standards they learned during, or derived from, life on Pohnpei, reinforced by frequent visitors and long-term coresidents from the island who generally bring with them more traditional patterns of behavior, speech, and thought.

Pohnpeians in Kansas City recite, without hesitation, which paramount chiefdom they hail from, and can also usually relate their section membership. Unique to Kansas City among diasporic Pohnpeian groups is the Section Over Heaven of Kansas City (Hubbard 2013, 2016). Started over ten years ago, the section survived the death of its first section chief, and the current section chief regularly awards new titles, most recently in the fall of 2016. His sons-in-law, nephews, and other relatives and community members received section titles within this chiefdom.

The section chief also passed a paramount chiefdom-level title he received to a prominent section member in the fall of 2016. This high title is the most recent honorary title to come to Kansas City through the Kitti paramount chief. The paramount who authorized and legitimated

the Kansas City section through his *manaman* (cognate of the Polynesian *mana*) circa 2004, previously awarded more than a dozen paramount chiefdom-level titles to section members. The Kansas City section forms a significant center of activity for a large number of residents, though certainly not all. At this point, maybe twenty-five percent of the metro area Pohnpeian residents participate with some regularity in section-related events. About fifty-percent of Kansas City residents rarely participate in the section and about twenty-five percent eschew it altogether. Though section membership may not constitute a sharp dividing line for all Kansas City residents, as exceptional circumstances can trigger more or less engagement, it is fair to say that two main groups exist in Kansas City: those who self-identify as section members and those who do not. Whether Pohnpeians in Kansas City participate in section activities regularly, periodically, or never, most all identify as Kansas Citians.

Due to the significant presence of people with Kittī paramount chiefdom native membership and the Kittī Nahnmwarki's organization of the area as a section within his paramount chiefdom, Kansas City is seen as a Pohnpeian place, specifically a Kittī place. Pohnpeians elsewhere in the U.S. view fellow Pohnpeians in Kansas City as more traditional. The section's presence and the residents' activities lead to this classification, with section-organized feasts which benefit section members, chiefs, and the broader community, as well as fund-raising activities for Kansas City and non-Kansas City Pohnpeians alike manifesting this more traditional attitude.

### **Mehn Madolenihmw Nan Midwest (The Madolenihmw Section of the Midwest)**

In around 2011, a high-ranking Madolenihmw man living in Kansas City prevailed upon the current Madolenihmw Nahnmwarki to authorize a section under their paramount chiefdom to be organized in the U.S. A couple decades ago, this man was on the *ahlen mwahr* (path of titles)

in line for the paramount chieftainship when he joined the U.S. military and emigrated from Pohnpei. The then-Nahnmwarki stripped him of his title.<sup>20</sup> This Kansas City man's relative has since ascended to the paramountcy and restored him to the path of titles, but he remains well down the official ranks. Though assured of special accommodations with regard to his advancement should the current Nahnmwarki pass away, others tell me his demotion and the still-speculative status of his expected restoration trouble him. The result is that some refer to this section he was successful in negotiating as “insurance,” a way for him to make regular cash contributions to the paramountcy, continually reemphasizing his value and worthiness for restoration to what many people consider to be his rightful place in the chiefdom. The contributions he makes to the Nahnmwarki in the name of the section come from him and his family, but also his section members.<sup>21</sup>

Upon official recognition of this new U.S.-based Madolenihmw section, the founder immediately passed the section chief title to another who lives in Storm Lake, Iowa, and granted the executive chief title to an individual living in Asheville, North Carolina. Regarding section activities, the founder told me they at least have a feast for the paramount chief each year (*kamadipw en wahu*), though he recently admitted that sometimes he has just sent contributions to the Nahnmwarki on his own if section leaders were unable to coordinate a formal event. The extraordinary dispersion of this group's members works against its ability to physically come together.

Members of this approximately 100-person group share paramount chiefdom native-

---

20 This Nahnmwarki was of a different keimw (“corner” of the clan that qualifies Madolenihmw men for the paramountcy via matrilineal descent) and presumably saw an opportunity to open a slot to fill with one of his relatives. This maneuver seems similar to the—more transparent than usual—Supreme Court justice appointment machinations we have seen in the U.S. in recent years.

21 My financial background leads me to make the comparison of many entrepreneurs using OPM (other people's money) to fund their projects. “His” section members are like investors—should this man be successful in his advancement, they can expect a return on their investment, though—again, like entrepreneurs—nothing comparable with reward this man stands to receive.

membership despite being marked by a number of other identity categories based upon residence, even U.S. residence, and sometimes other section-based membership. The daily living conditions of this group's members are similar to those described in the Cincinnati and, especially, the Kansas City populations discussed above. Indeed many members of the Madolenihmw section in the U.S. are also Kansas City residents—some even members of the Kansas City section. The U.S.-Madolenihmw section seems to cohere situationally and most of its members live in diverse locations within the U.S. with no large cluster existing in any one place.

### **Five Pohnpeian Social Configurations—A Summary**

While aspects of social organization and history sometimes differ markedly in these social configurations, Pohnpeians recognize all of them but the U.S.-Madolenihmw section as places where Pohnpeians cluster in groups and from which they identify themselves as being. In all cases, people identify as members of these groups, though not necessarily consistently or exclusively, with multiple identities and memberships coming into play, and sometimes into conflict. In all cases, aspects of native-member and participant-member identity, group cohesion, and the linked constellation of factors of leadership-family-place-production-chieftdom-titles runs through the lives of the Pohnpeians in each of these groups. The following table identifies the presence or absence of the basic aspects of the groups described above, with more detailed discussions to follow in subsequent chapters.

Table 4.1		Traits by Population Unit			
Category	Pohrasapw	Kolonia	Cincinnati	Kansas City	U.S.- Madolenihmw
Native-member Status	No*	Yes	Yes	Yes	No*
Participant-membership	Yes	No	No	Yes*	Yes
Unit Population	100	6000	800	1000	100
Cohesiveness (Minimin)	Yes	No*	No*	Yes*	No*
Subgroups (Pwihn) Exist	No*	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	No*
Group Leadership	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No*
Familial Basis (Peneinei)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes*
Place Manifestation	Yes	Yes	Yes*	Yes	No
Cooperative Production	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	No
Tribute Rendered	Yes	No*	No*	Yes*	Yes*
Section Status	Yes	No*	No*	Yes*	Yes
Unit-level Titles and Rank	Yes	No	No	Yes*	Yes
*Asterisks indicate that some qualification of this conclusion is necessary and will be explained below.					

### *Group Native-membership and Participant-membership Categories*

Generally, participant-member (*tohn*) status applies to Pohrasapw section members but Pohrasapw native-member status does not. However, when differentiating between other Kitti native-members, Pohrasapw may be may be used as a native-member category. In reverse, one is generally a Kansas City native-member but can be a Kansas City participant-member when referring specifically to section membership. Though native-member status applies to both, I have not heard Kolonia participant-member or Cincinnati participant-member used to identify



people. However, I have heard Summit Heights participant-member and participant-member of fund-raising groups applied to Cincinnati residents. The U.S.-Madolenihmw section is comprised of participant-members who happen to share native-member status in the Madolenihmw paramount chiefdom, but this is a precondition of section membership, not a result of it.

### *Unit Population*

The unit populations vary widely. I witnessed approximately 50 participating members in Pohrasapw, though section members indicate actual membership approaches 100 when including dispersed members. The upper end population of these units is Kolonia with around 6,000 residents (FSM 2010), whereas Cincinnati and Kansas City report around 800 and 1,000 persons, respectively (Hubbard 2016). However, the core Kansas City section membership exceeds 100 and participation can surpass 200. At least 100 Pohnpeians reside in the Summit Heights area of Cincinnati, with the U.S.-Madolenihmw section membership at approximately 100 as well.

### *Group-level Cohesion*

The sense of group cohesion and cooperation embodied in the term *minimin* almost always exists within Pohnpeian families and usually within minimal supra-familial groups. Pohnpeians speak of Pohrasapw having group cohesion and Kansas City broadly as having group cohesion as well, though they consistently single out the Kansas City section as the source of this cooperation and solidarity. The U.S.-Madolenihmw section shows periodic, situational cohesion, though it does not otherwise function as a group outside annual tribute-raising efforts. Cincinnati and Kolonia are not described as having group cohesion, particularly when compared to, for instance, Kansas City.

However, aggregates smaller than these larger-scale units also have group cohesion, whether in ethnic enclaves in Kolonia, in Summit Heights or in fund-raising groups in

Cincinnati. Further, Cincinnati features a level of cohesion and unit-level cooperation and identity when competing in softball tournaments. Kolonia residents regularly participate in “home” sections, from which they draw the more typical social support found in Pohnpeian social groups, and Kolonia bears the status of a municipality, a status shared by the higher-level sociopolitical units of the paramount chiefdoms, from which it derives political order.

### *Existence of Subgroups*

With no subgroups, Pohrasapw pretty clearly constitutes a minimal supra-familial social unit, claiming just a few non-family members among its number. The U.S.-Madolenihmw section likewise has no subgroups within the section itself. Myriad subgroups comprise Kolonia, as previously noted, including several ethnic enclaves. However, Pohnpeians living in Kolonia claim membership in other communities—their home sections, as noted above. Cincinnati features groups living in residential proximity comprised, primarily, of a handful of families, such as Summit Heights, and Little Kolonia, as well as kava-drinking groups and a number of fund-raising clubs, some of which coincide with smaller residentially and family-focused groupings. In addition to some proximate residential groupings, primarily in the east Kansas City metro, north central, and Johnson County areas, the Kansas City section represents a distinct subgroup of Kansas City, with two primary geographic concentrations in discrete areas of east and north central Kansas City.

### *Group Leadership*

The pattern of enterprising individuals locating and utilizing available resources in a particular area which comes to be identified with the group holds in four of the five cases. The sole exception is the U.S.-Madolenihmw section with its delocalized nature. However, in the places the U.S.-Madolenihmw section members reside, this factor exists just as it does with the

other four groups. Further, leadership clearly existed in the genesis of the U.S.-Madolenihmw section as it took motivation and persuasive skills to obtain section status and mobilize support.

### *Familial Basis*

In all five of these groups, Pohnpeians live in nuclear and extended families, including extensive networks of both consanguineal and affinal kin generally residing in close proximity. The U.S.-Madolenihmw section membership is much more dispersed than the other four. The smaller-sized Pohrasapw features a more dense concentration of related persons than the larger, more geographically dispersed groupings in Kolonia or the U.S.-based communities. Though generally dispersed, Cincinnati's Summit Heights features a degree of sibling-set proximity. However, like Pohrasapw, the Kansas City section includes a concentrated group of intermarrying families. These three familial units, plus a fourth, bring in still other section members, though this fourth has not intermarried extensively with the other kinship groups. These families live in two primary clusters in Kansas City, with other members dispersed throughout Kansas City, the U.S., and Pohnpei itself.

### *Varying Manifestations of Place*

Similar to the group leadership category above, four of the five population units obtain place status, though with some nuances. The U.S.-Madolenihmw section is not a place and does not exist with reference to a specific, localized place, though it is generally connected with the Madolenihmw paramount chiefdom—but as a native-member identity category more than as a place. Pohrasapw is a Pohnpeian place within the Kitti paramount chiefdom. Kolonia is a Pohnpeian place as a municipality of Pohnpei state. Cincinnati is a place Pohnpeians recognize but it is considered to be a U.S. place. Kansas City is a place that exists in the U.S. but it is considered to be a Pohnpeian place due in large part to its existence as a Pohnpeian section

(Hubbard 2013, 2016).

### *Cooperative Production*

Of all the groups considered, only Pohrasapw residents could subsist based upon their direct relationship with the territory their group occupies. And even in Pohrasapw, non-locally produced goods are consumed with regularity. People there use cars and purchase gas, electricity, clothing, and food, such as canned meats and rice. However, people in Pohrasapw could survive absent these non-local goods due to their ability to work cooperatively and derive subsistence from their land and ocean resources. Pohnpeians living in Kolonia could typically move back to the sections to which they belong and have a similar experience to Pohrasapw, though their population density in Kolonia proper would not support such a strategy in Kolonia itself.

Clearly the Cincinnati, Kansas City, and U.S.-Madolenihmw groups share a situation based in U.S. consumer culture, requiring subsistence to come through mediated sources such as supermarkets, department stores, construction companies, utilities, and auto manufacturers. However, other than the delocalized U.S.-Madolenihmw section, members of these groups cooperate to derive the resources they need from the location in which they live. Pohrasapw does so in the most traditional manner, with Kolonia residents in general following due to their frequent ownership and cultivation of land in their native paramount chiefdoms and sections. Cincinnati and Kansas City residents, along with the U.S.-Madolenihmw section members derive subsistence from participation in the U.S. economy generally in the form of wage labor. Their wage labor is accessed primarily through kinship networks, and Pohnpeians in these locations often work in large numbers at common employers such as in manufacturing, elder care, and restaurants. Their underlying ethic of cooperative production underwrites these observed patterns in all of these groups other than the U.S.-Madolenihmw section due to its dispersed residential

character.

### *Tribute Rendered*

These population units likewise generate excess production that can be used as contributions to chiefs at feasts. However, only three of these groups render tribute to a chiefdom coincident with their population unit. In Pohrasapw, the Kansas City section component of Kansas City, and the U.S.-Madolenihmw section, the groups themselves sponsor feasts and give tribute to their own local chiefs. However, in Kansas City and the U.S. Madolenihmw section, tribute is generally rendered as cash versus produce. Pohnpeian Kolonia residents more generally participate in home sections by traveling to them on weekends or sending tribute to relatives to represent them vicariously at feasts, so there is some separation between the individual and the tribute-gathering group. Those in non-section Kansas City and in Cincinnati feature an elaboration on this pattern and contribute less frequently than their Kolonia counterparts and may participate in markets and fund-raising groups that effectively bypass officially recognized chiefs. These events maintain the redistributive spirit of feasts, including gatherings in the Summit Heights area of Cincinnati which feature chiefly titles by virtually all members, assigned by one chief, resulting in a sort of formalized informality at these events as compared to otherwise similar ones.

### *Section Status*

It follows from the preceding discussion that not all of these groups are recognized as sections. Pohrasapw is, but Kolonia itself is not. Like Pohrasapw, Kansas City is a section within the Kitti paramount chiefdom but it does not exist within the contiguous boundaries of its sanctioning chiefdom. Further, not all Kansas City residents are members of the Kansas City section and though on Pohnpei some non-section members may live within a section's

boundaries, my sense is that they are relatively few by comparison as a large majority of Kansas City residents are not section members. Cincinnati has no section but its Summit Heights subgroup is similar to the Kansas City section in that a large number of its residents have titles derived from a single chiefdom. However, this is the Sokehs paramount chiefdom, not a local-level section, headed by a generally co-residing chief with explicit authority who frequently mobilizes the group in cooperative efforts. The U.S.-Madolenihmw section exists as a group through section organization based on common native-member status in the Madolenihmw paramount chiefdom.

### *Unit-level Leadership*

While chiefs represent and lead Pohrasapw, Kansas City, and the U.S.-Madolenihmw group as sections, there are no ranking chiefs of Kolonia or Cincinnati as sociopolitical units, and not all Kansas City residents affiliate themselves with the section. However, that does not mean there are no leaders in these groups—official or situational—as Kolonia has municipal officials and softball teams have captains. More generally, rank within nuclear and extended families exists based on seniority, coming through the oldest descendant of the oldest female of the ranking sibling set, referred to as conical clanship. More broadly still, individuals with titles—particularly high-ranking titles from paramount chiefdoms, but also sections—take on leadership roles and/or are recognized and honored at events within these groups. As will be discussed in more detail in subsequent chapters, two of the Sokehs paramount chief's children live in the Cincinnati Summit Heights area, and the chief himself has awarded nearly 50 titles to Cincinnati residents, with most residing in Summit Heights. Though there are no officially recognized leaders of Kolonia or Cincinnati in the traditional sociopolitical system, traditional rank reveals itself in social groups in all these places.

## **Comparison of Observed Group Characteristics**

Ultimately, the main apparent divergences in these groups' traits occur in direct subsistence relationships to the areas in which the people live, unit population, corporate activity, identity categories, official section organization, and formal group leadership. As mentioned above, Pohrasapw exists as one of many Kitti sections, but Kolonia is not a section, nor does it have any sections. Kansas City's section is considered to be in Pohnpei by many, and even on Pohnpeian soil by some. It is a Kitti section and, like Pohrasapw, is populated by primarily Wene people, but also those from all five paramount chiefdoms. Cincinnati has no section, but its Summit Heights group features section-like size, corporate identity and activity, as well as internal rank supported by Sokehs chiefdom titles, though its members come from Sokehs, Uh, Nett, and even in-marrying people from other islands. The U.S.-Madolenihmw section is comprised entirely of people sharing Madolenihmw native-member identity, though they do not live in proximity to one another. Residents in all of these non-section units personally participate in sections either periodically—as is the pattern for those in Kolonia—or vicariously through family members and by way of cash contributions.

The larger point is that whether or not official section recognition exists in these social units, Pohnpeians organize themselves into section-like groups. The Kansas City section's emergence followed this pattern. Before formal Kansas City section organization, individuals bearing titles from other chiefdoms and sections took on leadership roles as intermarrying families engaged in cooperative activities generating subsistence and tribute, creating a supra-familial sense of group membership in the bargain. Ultimately, the Kitti paramount chief recognized the group and formalized it as a section, clearly marking it as a group coterminous with the place it occupied. Cincinnati has not been recognized as a section and, though its

Summit Heights group is not explicitly situated within Pohnpei's polity, it features rank and organization provided by the 50 Sokehs paramount chiefdom titles assigned to its residents. The U.S.-Madolenihmw section has section status and titles but lacks residential proximity and regular interaction between its members.

Petersen's (1982a) assertion that sections are the basic communal units of Pohnpeian society applies to Pohnpeian social groups generally, whether or not formal section organization marks them as such. The important characteristics include their communal aspect, basis in kinship (consanguineal and affinal, nuclear and extended, multigenerational family relationships), cooperative activity for both basic needs and tribute, and use of rank, maintaining relationships with, and mobility between, similarly configured groups in larger social aggregates. Flux, flow, and mobility apply to their members as they move within and between groups.

The observed characteristics of Pohnpeian social groups emphasize families, residing and/or working together in a cohesive manner to generate both basic production and tribute, as well as engaging in competition. These configurations provide a sense of group belonging, most generally marked by official section organization, along with essential identity qualities, revealed in group-recognized and higher-level chief-sanctioned leadership. Groups with section-like qualities form the basic supra-familial units of Pohnpeian society.

The Pohrasapw section is a prototypical Pohnpeian social group. The Pohnpeian population of Kolonia is primarily an aggregate of individuals largely in motion as they pursue economic rewards to supplement their lives in their home sections. Kansas City and Cincinnati feature people in situationally cohesive groups. Kansas City's section is more persistently cohesive than the Pohnpeian Kansas City population as a whole. Cincinnati's Summit Heights group features section-like traits. Despite section status, the U.S.-Madolenihmw group appears to



only cohere situationally, lacking the durability of prototypical sections. All five groups have aspects of family, rank, and a reliance on mobility with dispersed, often-migrating members contributing typically complementary resources to meet the demands of economic necessities and tribute obtain in these groups that cohere through shared identity tied to place, generated through cooperative activity.

Pohnpeian group membership has a fluid, flexible nature to it, despite strong ties to place and potential complications for place-based identity. The next chapter details specific activities which arise in Pohnpeian social groups. It focuses on the importance of organized activities in generating the cohesion found in the varying contexts of the five groups under consideration.

## **Chapter Five: Pohnpeian Population Units in Action**

### **Groups Cohere through Activities**

Recurring cooperative activity engaged in by a consistently similar group of people creates social cohesion (Petersen 1982a:124). In addition to contributing to group formation, activity also maintains groups. How that activity is ordered, who participates, when, how, and for what reasons in social groups in general vary greatly. Group activities mark births, deaths, and memorials of deaths; they include church, competitive feasts, sports, cooperative work groups, and regular gatherings to prepare for these other events or to just talk—about politics, gossip, individual problems; they provide the interaction necessary to bind, and sometimes fracture, these groups.

Participant-member identity, most typically tied to section membership marks Pohnpeians as belonging to a particular social unit. Pohnpeian participant-member groups generally claim the whole person, rather than the segmented demands of specialized-interest groups which are increasingly prevalent (Warren 1956:9). And while this tendency impinges on Pohnpeians in both Pohnpei and in the U.S., in both locations, the locality-based community with its claim on whole persons to engage in group activities predominates (Warren 1956:9). To be Pohnpeian, particularly a Pohnpeian participant-member of a group, requires commitment manifest in participation in group activities, providing for mutual support and cooperative effort for the benefit of the group and its members.

Identity and group membership influence who participates in which activities. Some of these endeavors obviously draw their impetus from biological events such as birth, death, and memorials of both. Church attendance is ideally a weekly or sometimes semi-weekly affair. Competitions vary based on the organizing entity's needs but—at least in the U.S.—some

softball tournaments claim holiday weekends on a recurring annual schedule. Some of these activities bring people together as regional and situational groups, but with less intensity and duration than those found in typical, daily configurations.

Timing of economic activity in the U.S. stems from work schedules often determined by employers with other underlying priorities. On Pohnpei central group activity remains section feasts. The cycle of feasts is regular, recurs annually, and appears determined by the higher-level paramount chiefs, though section chiefs often work out specific schedules as they mobilize section members to produce and render tribute in an acceptable fashion.

Connections between group members provide a condition precedent for coordinated activity. The stronger the connection and the more common connections in play, the better (Granovetter 1973:1376). Participating in group activities with one another generally requires proximity but also a shared sense of identity and common ideals (Granovetter 1983:224-228). These cooperative activities require, create, and maintain such connections. For Pohnpeians the most common group-level activities were—and remain—section feasts (Riesenberg 1968; Petersen 1982a; Hanlon 1988; Hubbard 2016).

#### *Group Activities—Section Feasts*

Though feasts appear to be simply mandated by the Nahnmwarki and coordinated by the section chief, the cycle of feasts actually has an ecological basis, though one influenced by human interventions (Petersen 2006). Most feasts historically coincided with when a given crop was ready, and the same limitations still apply. For example, a section cannot very well provide fresh breadfruit to the paramount chief if breadfruit is not in season.

In section feasts and section activities generally, who does what varies as does the level of effort and investment. Different people have different roles, different titles, and different

responsibilities. Four different Pohnpeian elders have emphasized to me that historically these titles described an individual's actual duties (Hubbard 2016:156). In Young's (1999:9) Durkheimian conception of group cohesion, such complementary economic functions generate organic solidarity. In the Pohnpeian case, the ideologies of family and chieftainship mobilize people in section feasts (Mauricio 1993; Petersen 1982a; Riesenbergs 1968; Hubbard 2016). Even though the feasts happen under the mandate of the paramount chief and often tribute goes to him, he has no direct contact with the people doing the work. As one section chief put it to me, "He [the paramount chief] doesn't have any people." Though they exist within his paramount chiefdom the people cohere as a section through activities into which the section chief—often the head of a kin group largely coincident with the section—or his designee such as the executive chief compels, cajoles, or coaxes them.

The fall 2015 *kotekeh* (yam first-fruits) section feast in Pohrasapw will serve as one brief example of feast activity. Approximately 60 members of this relatively small section attended the feast. One new section member's sole contribution was to carry one end of a tree limb that held a surprisingly heavy suspended yam. Another member not only cultivated, harvested, and prepared his contributed yams, but also caught fish, grew and harvested kava, helped to coordinate section feast attendance, and organized, led, and participated in the preparation of kava during the feast. The section chief himself functioned much as the social-emotional specialist Warren (1956:11) mentioned, including awarding a title to a new section member. Though he provided no yams himself, the section chief's speeches emphasized the group's common identity and purpose as family and section members, and reinforced the ideological and institutional supports for the feast itself and chieftainship broadly. He then split up the offerings made to him, redistributing most of the goods to the feast participants, directing

selected items be set aside for the designated chief.

A Kansas City section feast in the fall of 2012 featured similar complementary activities (see also Hubbard 2013, 2016). Upwards of 100 section members gathered at the home of the executive chief who, together with his spouse and others, organized the tables, chairs, and other supporting items such as large bowls for kava and a sound system. Another man served as the master of ceremonies, but the executive chief conducted much of the business himself, including awarding approximately a dozen new titles to section members. The section chief lived in Pohnpei at the time, but a significant proportion of his family represented him at the feast. Two of the section chief's sisters coordinated preparation of much of the food, including rice, chicken, and banana-based confections, as well as other items to be raffled, such as bags of rice, and canned meats. Other high-ranking members did not attend for various reasons nor was it apparent to me that they provided any direct support for the feast.

Despite various levels of contribution and effort at this particular feast provided by discrete section members, the overall activity created a sense of community for new section members and maintained one for existing section members. Even those who did not attend expressed being impacted by the event. When I asked member in his early fifties why he did not attend, he laughed a little, then replied, “I didn't feel like going this time. But two of my daughters went. ... It is good because even if some of us don't go, we know our section is strong because the feast happened. And the Nahnmwarki will be happy because we're sending his tribute.” Individual roles, commitment, and participation in section feasts vary, but they form the backbone of group activity in typical Pohnpeian groups.

#### *Group Activities—Political*

Pohnpei features two ideally parallel, but actually intertwined, types of political

organization. The traditional sociopolitical side discussed in detail elsewhere involves sections and paramount chiefdoms typified by feasting and tribute as well as the general fundamental social organization. The Western-style state and national governments involve executive, legislative, and judicial branches. Candidates for office include well-known individuals often already holding important church positions and/or high-ranking titles in the traditional chiefdoms. Activity takes place in the form of, for example, campaigning and voting. The voting aspect appears relatively straightforward but extends to the U.S. with extensive efforts by the government and specific candidates at gathering absentee votes.

However, the traditional and electoral systems interpenetrate. One section chief also holds an important position in the local Catholic Church while serving in the Pohnpei state legislature. Upon his election to the legislature the Nahnmwarki's representatives offered him a prestigious paramount chiefdom level title. "This is the typical practice," he told me. "A high title either comes before or after election. Some men [in elected office] even hold titles so high they can sit beside the Nahnmwarki and Nahnken and sit behind everyone except those two." This last comment is telling in that sitting behind someone on the elevated portion of the feasthouse (*nahs*) indicates higher rank. High rank is reflected in feasthouse settings by appropriate individuals sitting on the raised platform facing everyone else. On this platform, no one is allowed to sit behind the highest-ranking persons, such that the Nahnmwarki sits farthest back on the platform "facing downward," while other lower-ranking members often sit on the platform between him and the general attendees.

Campaigning for Pohnpeian public office takes the typical forms one might imagine—fliers, radio spots, personal networks, but also appearances and speeches at competitions and feasts. One high-ranking member of the Kittu paramount chiefdom attended a section feast in

Pohrasapw, giving a brief speech regarding the upcoming elections as he promoted a candidate. A 2015 Kansas City feast featured a speech by a candidate soliciting absentee votes in a Pohnpeian election. In 2013, a Pohnpei state senator gave a speech at the annual softball tournament in Kansas City. Another candidate gave a speech at a softball tournament in North Carolina in the fall of 2015. While this was going on in North Carolina, the gentleman who gave the speech in Kansas City toured several cities in the U.S. in an attempt to gin up support for his candidacy. In each of these situations, the intersection of traditional and electoral government crosscut Pohnpeian communities and their activities—particularly those organized by and conducted within sections.

#### *Group Activities—Economic*

At the highest levels of Pohnpeian government the Compact of Free Association (“the Compact”) enters into play, influencing Pohnpeian communities in a fundamental way. The Compact opened up the doors to reciprocal migration and participation in U.S. and Pohnpeian economies, including other F.S.M. states, Palau, and the Marshall Islands. The primary factor Pohnpeians cite for migration is economic. As one thirty-five year-old Pohnpeian from Kansas City told me (Hubbard 2016:157):

Jobs in Pohnpei don’t pay us enough. It’s barely enough to buy what we need. If I make \$2.00 per day, it’s just enough to buy a bag of rice, some chicken, and some soy sauce. And maybe every now and then I can buy some electricity. So I had to move to America where work pays more just so I can live.<sup>22</sup>

Though specific situations vary and there are a few exceptions, Pohnpeians repeat this

---

<sup>22</sup> The \$2.00 per day sounds low, even for Pohnpei with its small-island economy. This figure was based on mid-1990’s wages and netted out the cost of transportation to and from a jobsite near Kolonia for someone living in the Kitti municipality. With that said, there may still be some hyperbole involved with that figure but it represents the way this individual—and many more—feel about economic opportunities in Pohnpei or, more to the point, the lack thereof. This perceived lack of economic opportunities predictably drives much of their migration, as this general sentiment motivates migrants from many places around the world.

general refrain regarding both migration to the U.S. and the situation in Pohnpei whether in Pohrasapw, Kolonia, Cincinnati, or Kansas City—or elsewhere.

The traditional prestige economy (Bascom 1948; Riesenberg 1968; Petersen 1982a; Hubbard 2016) likewise remains part of Pohnpeian life, regardless of community of residence. The man I encountered in North Carolina typifies the prestige economy's reach. Whether living in Madolenihmw on Pohnpei, Kolonia, or North Carolina, he participated or contributed to section feasts one way or another. Even on Pohnpei, some section chiefs now require cash as part of tribute generated. In some cases this may be due to a Nahnmwarki's demand for cash but in others the section chief himself has made this decision. Such a requirement taps direct or family participation in the cash economy, further enhancing the need for money and migration as opportunities to earn money on Pohnpei remain limited. This development—chiefs' demand for cash tribute—reflects further integration of the cash economy into the prestige economy and exacerbates the issue of the cash earning differential between Pohnpei and the United States.

In Pohnpei, the Nahnmwarki incorporates economic production via sections and titles and legitimates the social group, often initially family affairs as described above, by recognizing and naming sections encompassing ecological and human resources. In Pohnpeian groups in the U.S., the connection between economic production generated by the combination of human effort and ecological resources often involves many levels of mediation that obscures the relationship between people and environment. The connection remains, however, and if we elide the complex processes and look simply at jobs as the combination of the two, the structural similarities between the prestige economy and money economy for Pohnpeians becomes clearer.

Production in the prestige economy requires land and labor with access to both mediated by kin groups and titles. Mauricio (1993) noted the kin group was historically the source of both,



legitimated by production-appropriating higher-level authorities. Since the Compact, with the U.S. and FSM being the appropriating higher-level authorities, access to jobs in the U.S. most typically involves kin groups. Though a job may seem an individual thing, access to jobs tends to be based on networks as Granovetter (1973; 1983) indicated. Just as Pohnpeians' access to land is generally mediated by kinship, access to jobs in the U.S. often involves kin groups. In keeping with the paradoxical loosening the Compact generates, broader networks than those providing access to land in Pohnpei mediate job access in the U.S.

This pattern becomes clear as gatekeepers for jobs emerge in primarily manufacturing, nursing homes, and restaurants—structurally similar to those controlling access to land and titles in Pohnpei. Less tightly controlled, but still influenced in the first three cases, a kin group or a few related kin groups often control access to jobs in restaurants. In four different restaurants in three cities—two in Kansas City, Missouri, one in Jackson, Mississippi, and one in Jacksonville, North Carolina—kin groups control access to jobs. One Kansas City restaurant owner's nephew, a Japanese man, commented about Pohnpeian workers:

Those guys are great. We never had to worry about scheduling too much because they would cover for each other if someone was sick. ... Even when the chefs went on strike one Saturday [during] one of our busiest days of the year, our Pohnpeian manager called family members who were [chefs but] not working that night and they came in. And not all of the chefs they called were our employees. Some worked at other places but they came anyway. We had a tough night, but it was still one of our biggest of the year.

Though this Japanese man no longer works in the business, he maintains contact with some of the Pohnpeians he worked with and marvels at their strong family connections and ability to get things done as a group.

The North Carolina and other Kansas City example are similar to the previous one in that a couple of interrelated kin groups comprise the majority of the workforce with members of each

group represented at the management level, mediating access to jobs. The Jackson, Mississippi situation features one family with several in-laws working in an enterprise that entails part ownership in the venture. In all cases access to jobs and the ability to mobilize labor are crucial. The same holds true for Cincinnati, including influence over access to jobs at the Summit Heights manufacturing facility. This pattern repeats for Pohnpeians working in other industries, such as nursing homes, in both Cincinnati and Kansas City.

Whether in Cincinnati, Kansas City, or elsewhere in the U.S., Pohnpeian participation in the money economy means access to resources used for basic support for family, extended family, and the individual. Money provides enhanced status for the individual through conspicuous consumption and accumulation, though more muted than American analogues, and for family through remittances and more ready access to travel. Pohrasapw section members have access to money, augmenting their subsistence efforts and tribute offerings, but kava and yam production still confer more status in the prestige economy than purchased goods, though the latter are not unimportant. Kansas City section members and Kolonia residents must blend the demands of money-mediated subsistence with section-based prestige economy demands.

In Pohnpei, chieftainship often overlays cooperative group enterprises with symbolic solidarity and an outward appearance that can mask the underlying economic character. Whether on Pohnpei or in the U.S., the ability to mobilize labor to produce economic resources is key. How it is done varies between and within specific situations but a pattern emerges dating back to pre-Saudeleur days on Pohnpei (Mauricio 1993). A family member locates resources—on Pohnpei productive land, in the U.S. jobs—then renders the resources productive and attracts more family members and others, producing more, emerging in a position of influence as a community coheres through cooperative activity, often infused with and ultimately legitimated

by chieftainship.

### *Group Activities—Reproductive*

It may be that historically marriage outside of one's paramount chiefdom was uncommon, but such is not the case at present in either the U.S. or on Pohnpei. Petersen's (1982a) fieldwork in the 1970s and 1980s provides another point of reference on this topic. His host family included an Uh (Awak) man married to a Nett woman. My adoptive mother came from Kittu and her husband from Uh (Nan Uh).<sup>23</sup> As I make a mental list of married Pohnpeian couples I know, for virtually every spousal unit I count as intra-chiefdom, there is another that is inter-chiefdom. This observation reinforces the point that marriage entails expanding one's network and endowing one's children with inherent connections in multiple social groups. Whether within or without one's paramount chiefdom or even section, marriage implies connection to another clan. Though one is what one's mother is, the German-era mandate of patrilineal land inheritance likely enhanced the pre-existing awareness of, and reliance upon, one's father's kin.

As economic activities strengthen ties within a sociopolitical structure governing the interaction between individuals and resources, whether in ecological form or jobs, marriage and reproduction binds individuals to groups—certainly family units but often to other sections. In the Pohnpeian situation, observance of exogamous marriage requirements occurs with reference to matrilineal clanship (Riesenberg 1968; Petersen 2009). Most marriages appear to happen without much intervention these days, and occur relatively early in life, and divorce is not uncommon. Some unions happen with family intervention, as with a case of a young Kansas City man whose section chief uncle negotiated marriage to a young woman residing on Pohnpei.

---

23 One could argue that, like the neighboring Shetland Island groups Cohen (2001:13) mentioned, from an emic perspective, the proximate Uh areas of Awak and Nan Uh differ radically. From an outsider's perspective, however, the similarities of the two as both being from Uh hold.

Though there may have been other considerations involved, the young Kansas City man appears to have simply paid his bride's way to Kansas City. However, he now has commitments to his affines that will extend to financial assistance, and even support, should the need arise and the ability to assist exist.

Family size has decreased considerably from the Pohnpeian “Baby Boomer” generation mentioned above, reportedly around seven children per family in 1973 and six in 1980 (FSM 1980:2). The average number of children now seems to be around four per married couple, consistent with FSM-reported population trends (FSM 2010:8). For families largely existing in the U.S., my estimate is more on the low side of that figure and on Pohnpei a bit higher. Efforts at birth control on Pohnpei in the form of condoms and medication have gradually taken hold and, in the U.S., this extends to surgical interventions, primarily tubal ligations. However, Pohnpeian families and communities continue to reproduce themselves at a robust rate. Marrying outside one's local group creates obligations to another such group via affinal kin but also increases resources by, following the network model, creating a link to others with obligations to one's population unit due to the same affinal kinship connection.

#### *Group Activities—Ceremonial*

Weddings, births, and funerals represent events within the life cycle often marked by social groups. In the Pohnpeian case, church ceremonies also celebrate each of these occurrences, though I will focus on broader community involvement in funerals. While I have attended a number of funerals and memorials and have heard accounts of several others, I will briefly discuss my adoptive mother, Nahnei's, funerals in Kansas City and Pohnpei. Nahnei passed away at sixty-two years old. Her funerals featured similarities with others in Cincinnati, Kansas City, and Pohnpei, making them good cases to use as examples of underlying patterns.

Typical Pohnpeian funerals in the U.S. entail a gathering of family and friends the night someone passes away to drink kava and raise money for a funeral service in the U.S. Gatherings generally reconvene for ten consecutive nights and involve continued fund raising efforts through kava markets, raffles, and donations, accompanied by speeches memorializing the deceased, presided over by a high-ranking family member, title-holder, or chief. The number of these gatherings reflects the ten-day funeral cycle in Pohnpei, but with fewer themed events than on Pohnpei. These efforts ideally raise sufficient funds to secure transport for the deceased back to Pohnpei, along with at least one family member living in the U.S. to accompany the body and help coordinate burial “back home.” A funeral service ideally presided over by a Pohnpeian clergy member generally takes place at a funeral home, often occurring on a weekend during the ten-day funeral period.

Funerals on Pohnpei typically start with a church service, followed by a gathering at a family member's feasthouse, also presided over by a high-ranking family member, title-holder, or chief. Men present kava and people speak, paying homage to the deceased. Gatherings continue for a total of ten days and include full-fledged contributions involving pigs, yams, and kava, as well as fish, then a succession of kava-only days, and a concluding feast with more produce offerings. Family, friends, and section members typically attend, offering social and material support to the deceased person's family.

In Nahnei's case, seven days into the ten-day period, people lined up outside the brick-faced funeral home in suburban Kansas City, Missouri waiting to get in for her services. This particular funeral home handles many Pohnpeian funerals in the Kansas City area, perhaps as many as half according to one Pohnpeian man. This funeral home has a reputation for seamless transportation of the deceased to Pohnpei. The funeral director noted that Pohnpeian funerals are

typically well-attended.

After her remains were transported to Pohnpei, another funeral service was held, beginning in the Catholic Church close to the section in which Nahnei was raised. The proceedings shifted to the traditional ten-day cycle involving redistributive feasts, speeches, and kava drinking. Upon returning to the U.S., I visited Cincinnati and a Pohnpeian man from Kittu who lives there and is a relative of Nahnei's asked me if I noticed his brother's kava plant at her Pohnpeian funeral. "It was the biggest one there." With some pride he pointed to his own chest. "I sent \$300 to help buy the biggest one he could find." In addition to her expansive personality, as the oldest in her sibling set Nahnei held a somewhat elevated status, drawing more attention still to her funeral.

In both Pohnpei and Kansas City, Nahnei's family enjoyed significant aid from their social groups. Preceding her transport to Pohnpei, Nahnei's family coordinated her Kansas City funeral, one which also lasted ten nights and involved contributions of goods, speeches, kava drinking and fund-raising activities. Pursuant to Nahnei's pre-death requests, a prominent Pohnpeian man traveled from the Detroit area to give a speech about a week after she passed. "You all in Kansas City honor Nahnei with your generosity. But I tell you if I die, I want to die here, not in Detroit. There is no way we can raise enough money to take care of people like this." I asked him later why that would be. "There are more people here for one. But more than that, Kansas Citians act together." In other words, they have *minimin*, group cohesion. He allowed Nahnei's membership in the Kansas City section and the section itself were factors in the support expressed for Nahnei and her family as well.

The typical aspects of Nahnei's funerals included community-wide support for her and her family and the structural aspects of the ceremonies—the ten-day cycles, the fundraising in

the U.S., and the feasts in Pohnpei were all typical of such group activities. Raising money and tribute are typical of U.S.-based Pohnpeian funerals, though amounts will vary based on community size and individual and family networks that mobilize for support. Religious aspects were an important part of the process, with a Catholic deacon presiding over ceremonies in both locales, but these rites represented a miniscule part of the time dedicated to memorializing Nahnei. The real work was done by the groups on which she had claim and which had claim upon her, particularly those who were part of her family networks and social groups, especially sections. As part of the efforts, the individuals and families received support from their social groups; the group members constructed and maintained their sense of group membership and commitment to supporting one another.

#### *Group Activities—Social*

Much of Pohnpeian social interaction stems from the foregoing aspects of section, political, economic, family, and ceremonial events, in addition to competitions that will be discussed in the next portion of this chapter. These categories encompass much of Pohnpeian social life, not leaving much time for other reasons for interacting, though those do exist. Of course social encounters sometimes occur without obvious motivation, but often they are based on common and individual needs, or revolve around the other events mentioned—either preparing people for participation, or involving material preparations, not to mention conducting the events themselves.

The principal groups that exist outside the family are kava-drinking groups, in the case of the U.S. groups, with kava purchased from Hawai'i or Fiji. Sometimes these are ad hoc family- and friend-based assemblies that come together after a day's work in Pohnpeian government jobs, fishing on the reef, or tending garden plots, as well as working in suburban U.S. nursing

homes, factories, or restaurants. Such gatherings may be primarily men or sometimes virtually half men and half women, depending on the situation. Regardless, these groups represent crucial loci of social activity for Pohnpeians where opinions are shared, grievances sometimes aired, and norms and values, as well as current events, discussed and debated. Such gatherings offer opportunities for classic inter-group connections when one member crosses over to another group and/or maintains strong ties with a member or members in another group (Granovetter 1973, 1983).

In some cases, these gatherings may entail economic motives or, maybe more accurately, a reciprocal support component in the form of kava markets where people pay some sort of fee to drink kava which the host procures and prepares (see Small 2011:71 for such arrangements in migrant Tongan communities). The typical Pohnpeian situation involves someone who has a need arise, then spreads an announcement through their network of kin, work associates, other friends, and possibly Facebook friends that they will be sponsoring a market. Usually if one has held a market the requesting person has attended, one must attend the current requester's event or send a surrogate with support to avoid loss of future support, and possibly standing in the group. Exceptions may apply if someone is traveling or experiencing some sort of hardship. One sixty-something man described markets in 2016 to me as, "Micronesian insurance. If you need something, I help you. If I need something, you help me." He allowed such an arrangement is not perfect, but with the way they approach things, by holding—in his estimation—an ideally more forgiving, understanding, and accepting attitude than Americans, it works.

A more formalized version of the kava market is the *pwihn en mwusing* where people join scheduled, regular kava markets to raise money for alternating members, rather than the ad hoc approach typical markets feature. One Cincinnati man in his late thirties says such arrangements



help generate a community- and family-like ethos, regardless of the individuals' actual origins in Pohnpei. He emphasized the importance of proximity. “Living close to each other and working together are the most important things. Yeah, being actual family helps, but,” he pointed around the crowded garage, “these people have *become* my family over the years” (my emphasis). Together with the family and cooperative economic ventures, whether section- or workplace-based, such kava-drinking, fund-raising groups represent the loci of the most frequent localized activities, leading to the connections and relationships that lead to a given group's cohesion.

### *Group Activities—Competitive*

In Pohnpei, competition forms an important aspect of social life. Within a section, individuals compete for the most noteworthy production of, for example, pigs, kava, and yams, generally judged by size. Men likewise vie for recognition as the best public speakers. Production in the money economy enters in as well. Historically skill and valor in battle were factors and Pohnpeians and other Micronesians enter the U.S. military at an extraordinary rate, which may or may not be connected to this historical norm (Marshall 1979; Azios 2010). Competition and demonstration of one's worth infuses much of group activity.

Sections also compete with other sections in the first-fruits feasts to see which can provide the chief—usually the Nahnmwarki but, not infrequently, also the section chief—with the most and best at any given feast (Petersen 1982a; Riesenberg 1968). Competition helps sections maintain their identity and rank as against other sections. In general, cohesive social groups define themselves through differences from, distinctions with, and comparisons to, other like social units (Cohen 2001). Competition in ordered, institutionalized activities allows for fairly objective bases for comparison and differentiation.

As with section feasts noted above, less obvious factors underlie scheduling of

competitive events between Pohnpeian communities in the U.S. In particular, work schedules push the most prestigious of these events—softball tournaments—to major holiday weekends. Even dance competitions held during Micronesian Women's Day celebrations happen over weekends due to work schedules. Less formal dance competitions may occur in other venues, such as Kansas City section feasts.

The intra-section dancing competition in Kansas City involves a division between the families living north of the river and those living south (Hubbard 2016). Mainly women, but some men, participate, and no formal judging happens and no prizes are awarded. The winners get the most applause and cheers—and often, but not always, discreet bragging rights.

Micronesian Women's Day dance competitions are considerably more serious than the less-formal section variety, often involving judges recruited from Pohnpeians' places of business. The 2016 event included an African-American male work supervisor from a poultry processing plant, a white co-worker and her husband, a prominent Pohnpeian man from Detroit, and me. Event organizers report that bringing in judges from the outside lends an air of independence to the results, limiting controversy between participants despite some judges having limited experience with Pohnpeian dancing. Over ten troupes participated, though three came from Kansas City with section membership and extended kinship forming the cores of these groups.

Softball tournaments are the main attraction for Pohnpeians in the U.S. There are at least four recurring annual tournaments occurring on Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, and Thanksgiving holidays, usually the weekends for all but Independence Day, which varies according to the day of the week on which this holiday falls. Over 500 people typically attend these events, drawing teams from Iowa to Texas to Georgia to Ohio to Kansas, and many places in between. Cincinnati and Kansas City each host one of the tournaments every year with the

other two rotating regionally in the Midwest and Southeast United States. Sometimes Pohnpeians from these cities field multiple teams according to the pattern noted with dance troupes, but most often each fields one team.

Motivations for attending these tournaments vary, as one might expect, but most people express sentiments similar to the following from a twenty-year-old from Kansas City as we traveled to North Carolina. “I just like coming to see my friends and getting to know other Pohnpeians from around the U.S. ... Yeah, I would rather be playing but even if we don't have a team, I want to go whenever I can.” As it happens, he is a good enough player that another team recruited him to play in this tournament when he originally went just to watch. His cousin played for that team, giving him a family connection. A thirty-year-old man from Cincinnati said, “Softball brings us together and helps us see ourselves as a [locally] united group. It keeps us active together while competing with others.” Competition simultaneously generates the common activity necessary for group cohesion and a sense of differentiation from others, defining their group as distinct from other similar groups, yet maintaining connection with a broader network of Pohnpeians.

### **Types of Activities by Group**

The following table summarizes the group-level activities detailed above which take place in each of the five groups. Specific manifestations of these activities vary from population unit to population unit, but people in all of these groups engage in each of the seven types of activities noted in some fashion. In the discussion that follows, it becomes clear that some of these populations have different fundamental characteristics as groups. This fact could give rise to a discussion about the nature of the communities themselves. Each group undergoes pressures for both entropy and negentropy—the latter implying a tendency toward order—with both

exerting a sort of gravitational force drawing people in conflicting directions.

On the one hand, Pohrasapw is pulled apart by the money economy but held together by family and chieftainship. On the other hand, Kolonia is held together by access to the money economy, its colonial trajectory, and governmental activity but pulled apart by family and chieftainship drawing people to home sections. The same can be said of Cincinnati and Kansas City in general, though with differing intensity than what Kolonia residents experience due to greater distance from home sections—gravity's force diminishes with distance. A noteworthy exception is that the Kansas City section exerts a negentropic pull on people not dissimilar to Pohrasapw. Like Pohrasapw, the U.S.-Madolenihmw section draws its mandate from family and chieftainship but the lack of residential proximity weakens this force even as the pull of the money economy enhances entropy's exertion upon the group. Though a more extensive exploration of the nature of these communities could be productive, it is the people within these groups that remain the focus of this study. Said another way, the five groups used to conduct this study are groups of Pohnpeians, population units readily identified and referred to, but the degree to which they share community traits varies. The central issue remains how the individuals experience the factors being discussed and the implications this has for them living in the groups that they form.

Table 5.1 Activities Present in Population Units					
Category	Pohrasapw	Kolonia	Cincinnati	Kansas City	U.S.- Madolenihmw
Section Feasts	Full cycle of traditional Pohnpei Feasts	No Kolonia section feasts	No Cincinnati section feasts	Modified feasts in Kansas City section—three per year	Modified feasts in U.S.-Madol. section, two/yr, sometimes none
Political Activities	Formal chiefdom, Pohnpei state-FSM campaigns, Local voting	Part of Pohnpei state, FSM campaigns, local voting, no Kolonia section	Visiting politicians, Absentee voting, No formal chiefdom	Visiting politicians, Absentee voting, Formal chiefdom	Absentee voting by U.S. city, Formal chiefdom
Economic Activities	Subsistence, Group-oriented, Some wage labor, Prestige (produce)	Individual wage some group subsistence, Prestige via home sections	Individual wage some group wage, Prestige via cash and relatives	Individual wage frequent group wage, Prestige-home sections and KC section	Prestige economy in section via cash, Wage in resident cities
Marriage Patterns <sup>a</sup>	In-marrying to localized kin group and out-marrying to mainly Wene	Within Kolonia, home sections, regions, school connections	In Cincinnati area, also through relatives in U.S. and Pohnpei	In Kansas City area, contacts through relatives in U.S. and Pohnpei	Generally exogamous to section, but within cities of residence
Ceremonial Activities (Funerals)	Church service, Section-based ten-day funeral	Church service, Home section-based ten-day funeral	Kava drinking, fund-raising for ten days in U.S. Home section-based ten-day*	Kava drinking, fund-raising for ten days in U.S. Home section ten-day**	Based in U.S. cities of residence, Home section based ten-day*
Social Activities	Most activity at the Pohrasapw level within traditional chieftainship	Some localized activity through work and church, mainly home sections	Kava drinking, fund-raising groups augment family, friend, work	Kava drinking, fund-raising, family, friend, work, Section-based	Infrequent section feasts to raise cash tribute, In cities of residence
Competitive Activities	Primarily with other sections in the prestige economy through feasts.	Intra- and inter-community sports and feasting in home sections	Inter-community multiple softball tournaments per year	Inter-community softball, dance Direct intra-section, indirect inter-section	Periodically fields softball, dance, Indirect inter-section
<sup>a</sup> In all cases, exogamous matrilineal clan marriage rules continue to be observed. <sup>*</sup> Funds permitting—many efforts do not raise sufficient money to return the deceased to Pohnpei. <sup>**</sup> Also funds permitting but, primarily due to the local section, many more from Kansas City return to Pohnpei.					

### Section Feasts

Only those groups with section status will have unit-specific sections feasts, though at least some residents of all locations can and do participate in home section feasts either directly

or indirectly. Pohrasapw follows the traditional full cycle of feasts, averaging at least one significant tribute-producing feast per month. Kolonia residents typically participate in these feasts not through Kolonia but rather through their home sections. The same is true for Cincinnati residents though they do so vicariously through family members in residence, facilitated by cash. Non-section Kansas City residents follow this pattern. Kansas City section members participate directly in three feasts per year, using cash to generate tribute (Hubbard 2013, 2016). The U.S.-Madolenihmw section raises money for the paramount chief annually, and usually does so for the section chief as well.

### *Political Activities*

For purposes of this dissertation, the more important form of unit political activity is traditional Pohnpeian sociopolitical organization—specifically section status. This category overlaps with section status discussed in connection with identity, location, place, and section above. In short, Pohrasapw, Kansas City, and the U.S.-based Madolenihmw section share section-status distinction. In terms of nation-state political activity, Pohrasapw is Pohnpei-based section, with Kolonia ranking as the unique entity here—a Pohnpeian municipality. However, as Kitti sections, both Pohrasapw and the Kansas City section send representatives to the Kitti municipality's legislative body, the House of Lords, revealing some institutionalized overlap of traditional and nation-state politics. Otherwise, Cincinnati and Kansas City Pohnpeian residents participate in absentee balloting with members of the U.S.-Madolenihmw section doing so through their cities of residence. Campaigning by politicians and subsequent voting is an infrequent but important activity connecting all of these groups to Pohnpei.

### *Economic Activities*

Of course economic activities are necessary to sustain the groups and their members.

Pohrasapw residents participate regularly in the subsistence and prestige economies of Pohnpei, raising produce and livestock and catching fish, augmented by cash contributions to chiefs via migrant remittances and local wage labor. Kolonia residents likewise participate in the same activities through their home sections with greater emphasis placed on their cash contributions, but retaining other traditional production responsibilities. In this regard, Kolonia is a hybrid between Pohrasapw on the one extreme and Cincinnati on the other, with its combination of retained commitments via home sections in the prestige economy and wage labor. The U.S.-Madolenihmw section produces strictly cash for periodic contributions to chiefs and relies upon wage labor—like Kansas City and Cincinnati—for its economic resource base. Kansas City section members also rely upon wage labor but retain direct obligations to their local section for cash contributions, which are provided as tribute and partially converted into other goods via purchase on Pohnpei, and then contributed to chiefs. These forms of tribute derived from wage labor are in addition to the Kansas City section chief's direct contributions of produce as tribute, which he provides from his own efforts to the paramount chief. Accordingly, the Kansas City section, like Kolonia, lies at the midpoint of the continuum of economic activities found in these groups with a balanced mixture of wage labor and prestige economy participation.

### *Group-Level Marriage Patterns*

Ideally Pohrasapw could sustain its population exclusively with intra-section marriages, though I doubt that was ever the case with any Pohnpeian section in practice, with inter-section marriage alliances based on family and clan being too important for group security to completely forego. Most Pohrasapw marriage partners come from the surrounding Wene area. Likewise, Kolonia residents tend to marry people from either Kolonia or regions surrounding their home sections in their paramount chiefdoms. People from Cincinnati, Kansas City, and the

Madolenihmw section follow this same pattern. Based upon intermarriages between three families from Kitti and Madolenihmw, with a fourth from Uh coming into the mix, the Kansas City section—and Kansas City more broadly—provides a large and diverse-enough population base to allow many section members to marry within the section. They do, however, frequently marry individuals from other groups, including people from Kitti drawing from the Wene area more broadly. The Kansas City section represents a bit of an exception to the typical inter-section versus intra-section marriage patterns. This is the case because, although it is a Kitti section, the fact that it arises in Kansas City with diverse membership from all five paramount chiefdoms representing more than a dozen clans, matrilineal clan exogamy can be maintained, allowing members to marry within the section.

### *Ceremonial Activities*

When it comes to ceremonial aspects of community, the focus lies on funerals, as these are experienced by each of the groups. Funerals in Pohrasapw begin with a church-centered service—which draws extensively upon family and section resources—and are followed by 10-day section-based events marking the individual's passing and providing material and social support to the deceased's family. The same pattern follows for people from Kolonia generally via their home sections. In Cincinnati, Kansas City, and the U.S.-based Madolenihmw section, generally a church funeral will happen in the decedent's city of residence, funded by family and kava markets held to benefit the family. Ideally kava markets will continue for 10 nights to raise sufficient funds to transport the individual back to their home section on Pohnpei where, again ideally, a 10-day section-based Pohnpeian funeral will occur. The anomaly here is that the Kansas City section frequently mobilizes to support anyone who has a family member who passed, regardless of direct section membership. For example, a Kansas City section member's



cousin could pass away in a different U.S. city and the section would often sponsor kava markets for their family's benefit.

### *Social Activities*

In Pohrasapw, much of the social activity takes place around section feasts and funerals, with related produce-raising efforts occupying much of the balance of the time. In a nutshell, traditional chiefdom-related, prestige economy efforts predominate. Kolonia residents generally spend time working in wage labor during the day or workweek and spend evenings and/or weekends in the prestige economy. Wage labor is pervasive and kava markets are common in both Cincinnati and Kansas City with more formal fund-raising groups existing in both, and section-based activities frequently occurring in Kansas City. Formal tribute-raising feasts occur in Kansas City three times per year and the U.S.-based Madolenihmw section members participate in their local communities on a regular basis with periodic tribute-raising feasts. On balance, Pohrasapw exists at the far end of the spectrum, participating most completely in the traditional, prestige economy social activities, followed by Kolonia residents more generally, Kansas City section members, then U.S.-Madolenihmw section members. Non-section Kansas City residents and Cincinnati residents participate in home section activities through relatives and cash contributions and spend much of their social time in local kava-drinking groups, which support local group members.

### *Competitions*

Competitive activities follow a similar pattern with Pohrasapw and Kolonia residents participating through their home sections. More indirect participation through home sections sometimes occurs with Cincinnati and non-section Kansas City residents. The Kansas City section gets measured against other Kitti sections in the prestige economy, as does the U.S.-

Madolenihmw section in Madolenihmw. Some reports indicate that one Kittu paramount chief favored the cash contributions provided by the Kansas City section as opposed to the more typical produce-heavy offerings of other sections (Hubbard 2016). Kolonia, Cincinnati, Kansas City, and sometimes the U.S.-Madolenihmw section field competitive sports teams and dance troupes. Whether in the prestige economy, via cash and produce, or sports, such as softball and dancing, competition within and between groups fosters a sense of group and place-based identity, simultaneously creating a sense of differentiation and commonality within and between the groups.

### **Population Unit Activities Summary**

Once again, Pohrasapw emerges at one end of the spectrum as the most traditional of the five social groups, reflecting activity patterns of a prototypical Pohnpeian community. Kolonia more generally follows through residents' home sections. The Kansas City section, featuring hybridized activities, is close behind. Non-section Kansas City and Cincinnati residents reveal nearly identical patterns of activities to one another, and the U.S.-Madolenihmw section finds all but a few activities based in members' U.S. cities of residence, despite sharing section status with Pohrasapw and Kansas City.

Though all of these groups participate in the activities noted in some fashion, some patterns arise. Kolonia, Cincinnati, and Kansas City function as regional social configurations, providing access to more resources than any single smaller group. Each provides opportunities for wage labor upon which the other groups rely in various degrees. Though the U.S.-Madolenihmw group shares section status with Pohrasapw and Kansas City, it lacks frequent corporate activities and concentrated population. Kansas City section members share similar daily life circumstances with Cincinnati and Kolonia residents—though in differing degrees of

emphasis—as many in all three locations use wage labor to support themselves and kin living in home sections elsewhere. However, the Kansas City section and Pohrasapw also feature many similarities with their status as Kitti sections, their chiefs' participation in the Kitti House of Lords, as well as participation in the Kitti prestige economy, and having dense cores of family interlocked by marriage at the center of their groups.

### **Group Activities—Institutional Scaffolding**

In many communities, especially migrant communities, schools and churches represent crucial institutions for maintaining a group ethos. Education is important to Pohnpeians, both on the island and in the U.S., and was an important initial draw to the U.S. for early arrivers, pursuing college education in Kansas City (Hubbard 2016). However, education's relative import in constructing and maintaining Pohnpeian social groups in both the U.S. and Pohnpei seems relatively minimal—especially compared to section-related activities revealing chieftainship.

Churches are the central institutions in migrant Samoan and Marshallese communities (Janes 1990; Duranti, et al. 1995; Hess, et al. 2001; Hubbard 2016), but I see little relative impact by churches in U.S.-based Pohnpeian social groups. On Pohnpei, Pohnpeians lead most, if not all, services in many Catholic Church ceremonies, and virtually all in Protestant churches. In the U.S., Pohnpeian church attendance happens, but not with much regularity for many people. When rare visits from deacons or others from Pohnpei occur, a spike in attendance may follow. In Pohnpei, tradition and chieftainship are particularly strong, even compared to, and combined with, Church influence and activities. Unlike Kosrae, a neighboring Micronesian island, where the Church supplanted the traditional sociopolitical system (Petersen 1999:375), Pohnpeian chieftainship largely incorporated Christianity early on, rather than the other way around (e.g. Hanlon 1988:95).

If school and church are lesser causes in structuring and supporting Pohnpeian social organization than one might expect based on apparently analogous situations, which factors apply? When considering migration and the U.S.-based Pohnpeian groups specifically, economic factors and drives must be considered. Family relationships both spur migration and buttress social organization. As Nahnei told me in 2015, “The reason I came here [to Kansas City] was to see my oldest grandson born. And even though I went back to Pohnpei after, I had to come back to Kansas City to be with my family.” Nahnei spoke very little English and, as she became ill, suffered considerably for being in the U.S., as family members had to attend to the exigencies of survival at the margins of the money economy. Family drew her to—and kept her in—Kansas City, as it does people in Pohnpeian groups generally, even when economic factors also apply.

When I visited Pohnpei in both 2014 and 2016, a number of people told me how the government, the church, and tradition generally—but particularly chieftainship—combine to support Pohnpeian society. While I see the importance of the first two, they are so ingrained with and penetrated by the third, I find tradition and the institution of chieftainship encompassing the whole and eclipsing both government and church. I am not alone in this assessment. A former governor of Pohnpei state and holder of a high-ranking paramount chieftom title told me the government is critically dependent on the influence of tradition and chieftainship to maintain order. In fact chieftainship does most of the work. “Without [chieftainship], Pohnpei would be chaos.” This fact reinforces the assertion that Pohnpeian chieftainship is a spandrel which arose as a result of Micronesian matriliney (Petersen 2009:50). Chieftainship arose as a byproduct of an adaptive trait—matriliney—and acquired adaptive value itself over time. As I understand it, chieftainship is the institution, the specific spandrel that has acquired adaptive qualities and is “central to the organization of all social life within [Pohnpeian] communities” (Petersen 2009:50,

emphasis omitted).

While chieftainship is pervasive in Pohnpei it appears to be absent among Pohnpeian groups in the U.S. other than the Kansas City section. But, as the saying goes, appearances can be deceiving. Most of the Pohnpeians who migrated to the U.S. at the age of thirty or older, brought titles along with them, as well as the social rank and commitments these entail. In the non-section Kansas City population, people are generally indifferent to the Kansas City section; in Cincinnati the prevailing opinion holds the Kansas City section to be illegitimate at best. However, even in Cincinnati, with the typically negative attitude toward a U.S.-located section, people frequently allow that if a Nahnmwarki organized a section in Cincinnati, they would often participate in section activities when time and resources allowed. While they are happy to receive paramount-chieftom titles with the accompanying greater prestige and fewer responsibilities, they would resist being granted section titles, which carry less prestige and entail more work. These same people also frequently contribute to section and ceremonial activities impacting family members on Pohnpei by sending cash, as with the cash contribution to assist with Nahnei's funeral noted above. They simultaneously support local groups in Cincinnati and their section—or their family's section—on Pohnpei.

Pohnpeian chieftainship arose in part as a manifestation of Micronesian matriliney, a spandrel which took on adaptive value over time, one central to internal community structure and function.<sup>24</sup> Its application to situations outside of this original context yield exaptations—adaptations of traits “that evolved to serve one function ... [which] prove handy adaptation[s] for entirely unanticipated one[s]” (Tattersall 2013:115). Pohnpeian chieftainship generates several

---

24 Pohnpeian chieftainship branches from a base that supports many offshoots of hierarchical social organization other than this specific manifestation. It shares common characteristics with pan-Austronesian chieftainship, itself growing from roots established even farther back in time, possibly to ancestors from the Philippines, Taiwan, and, ultimately, Southeast Asia (Bodley 2011:181-215; Kirch 2002).

exaptations in the context of migration including the following: 1) it provides a mechanism for redistributing resources generated by migrants back to home sections in the form of tribute; 2) formal section organization in Kansas City and the U.S.-Madolenihmw section structure and support group function in the U.S.; 3) the Sokehs Nahnmwarki awarding titles to a localized group of Cincinnati residents in Summit Heights strengthens their group, enhances the title-holders' prestige, and provides the Nahnmwarki access additional resources, and; 4) regardless of its formal presence or impact in a given population unit, the principles found in chieftainship—leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles generally apply in each group in some form.

Community leadership is crucial to organizing activity necessary to support Pohnpeian social order and group life—whether in the form of competition, ceremony, or section-related events, as well influencing productivity and distribution of the excess resources. In Pohnpei, this aspect arises within the institution of chieftainship and in the U.S. many de facto community leaders possess high-ranking titles, either brought with them from Pohnpei or obtained since migrating. Similar to chieftainships among other peoples, Pohnpeians rely on a mix of ascription and achievement to qualify individuals for leadership positions (Hubbard 2016).

Cohesive social organization tends to rely more heavily on family membership, commitment to the group, and ability, as is evident in sections (Petersen 1982a). A number of Pohnpeians have noted both the original Kansas City section chief's—and his successor's—skills in organization and motivation. The original chief deployed broad rhetoric and brought a force of personality that mobilized people. The current section chief works through engagement, persuasion, and personal labor. Each in his own way, these men emphasized that participation leads to rank recognized in titles. In the current section chief's words, “Sweat makes a title.” Activity is key in building and maintaining cohesive communities and Pohnpeian leaders and

group members recognize people accordingly.

## **Chapter Six: Leadership, Family, Group Membership, and Social Cohesion**

### **Pohnpeian Social Groups—Basic Aspects**

Chapter Three introduced the broad outline of the leadership-family-place-production-chieftdom-titles constellation of factors, as well as the importance of group membership and social cohesion in Pohnpeian social organization. Chapter Four analyzed the five groups under consideration for the presence or absence of these factors. This chapter will focus on the leadership and family aspects of the six linked factors in Pohnpeian social organization, as well as the important categories of identity found in group membership and the social cohesion to which these elements contribute. The next chapter will discuss the remaining factors in more detail and draw out the importance of mobility and flexibility in the overall system of Pohnpeian social organization.

Chieftainship structures much of social life for Pohnpeians. Native- and participant-membership statuses based in chieftainship and localized activity contribute to group cohesion. The six linked factors of leadership-family-place-production-chieftdom-titles both provide the context for and rely heavily on these other institutions, identity categories, and principles (Riesenberg 1968; Petersen 1982a). Ideologically, the interwoven threads of family and chieftainship combine with place to bind Pohnpeian social groups (Petersen 1982a; Mauricio 1993). Taking the outrigger canoe as another metaphor for the interrelation of family and chieftainship may be helpful as well. In this usage family takes the place of the main hull and chieftainship the outrigger, keeping the conveyance stable as individuals navigate social and ecological seas.

### **Leadership Abilities**

This discussion assumes leadership not to be a formal category marked by a chiefly



title—though it usually becomes recognized by such—but rather that quality found in an individual that allows him or her to mobilize a group of people to act cooperatively. That action may be aimed at addressing a particular issue or concern, such as facilitating access to economic resources, commemorating the passing of a group member, producing tribute through a section feast, or organizing a softball team. The specific areas in which leadership is manifest may vary markedly between the five social groups under consideration.

For example, the Pohrasapw section chief will not likely mediate access to wage labor but will need to regularly mobilize his people to produce tribute at feasts. Conversely, though they may contribute to section feasts through kin, leaders in Cincinnati do not trouble themselves with organizing sections feasts. They do, however, work to provide community members access to jobs. Group leaders residing in Kolonia may have some responsibilities on both ends of this spectrum, though typically in more of a support role when it comes to section feast organization. Leaders of the U.S.-Madolenihmw section may need to mobilize support for tribute once per year, but generally do not bear responsibilities for ordering other activities as they are typically addressed in members' places of residence.

Leadership in Kansas City arises through managing access to jobs for kin in some circumstances, such as at one of the Japanese Steakhouses where Pohnpeians comprise the vast majority of the workforce. The typical pattern is that a family member gains employment through friends or other family members and then facilitates getting other family members jobs. Further, the Kansas City section chief and his delegates mobilize people to act when supporting acute situations such as deaths and the associated economic and social costs. In common with leaders in the other social groups, regardless of issue being addressed, the Kansas City section leaders primarily rely on their family networks to meet their obligations.

## Family Traits

Family connections are reinforced by leadership, often involving rank derived from chieftainship, itself based on family and productive activity. These familial connections enhance access to resources, drawing Pohnpeians back together in the U.S., leading to group formation and social organization. As individuals gain access to jobs, and, especially as they become gatekeepers for access to these economic resources, both consanguineal and affinal kin follow. As more Pohnpeians come to reside in a localized area and subgroups become connected through work and other group activities such as competitions, funerals, and mutual-support efforts like kava markets, groups form and leaders emerge or become evident as already-existing centers of influence. Sometimes these groups exhibit clear markers of social organization, and at other times the connections are looser and arise situationally.

Though strong ties tend to bind the nuclear family, and historically strong ties connected even extended Pohnpeian kin, those connections have loosened over time due in part to factors including nation-state formation, increasing population, migration, and wage labor. Strong or weak, the ties that bind extended family—still particularly acute with matrilineal kinship (Petersen 2009)—connect Pohnpeians with crucial social and economic resources.<sup>25</sup> A residual effect of large families includes extensive networks of consanguinal and affinal kin, a phenomenon that gained steam in the post-World War II years as Pohnpeian family size exploded even as mobility increased. The U.S. “Baby Boomer” generation's proportional population impact appears muted compared to their Pohnpeian cohort. Pohnpeian sibling sets of this era frequently exceeded ten and sometimes approached twenty, ultimately sending adult children far and wide with marriages and searches for economic resources, establishing an increasingly complex social and economic landscape for families to both navigate and utilize.

---

25 See Granovetter (1973; 1983) for general discussions on this concept.

The notion of Pohnpeian interconnection extends to a sense of universal kinship, though some regional, local, and personal exceptions apply, particularly for those living in the U.S. A sixty-year-old Pohnpeian woman explained this to me in 2013 as I drove her to buy food to prepare for an upcoming feast. She wore a skirt made of thick black cloth appliqued with colorful flowers—attire called *urohs* by Pohnpeians. A red sequined shirt, flip-flops, and shiny black purse completed her outfit. She squinted at me through her cataracts as she spoke. “If you're Pohnpeian and you travel anywhere in the U.S., you don't ever have to worry about where you'll sleep. You don't need any money for that. You just need to know where the Pohnpeians live.” When I asked how she would know that if she was from Kansas City and traveling in Texas, for example, she replied, “If the place you're going isn't with family, you'll have a friend or a family member who will have a friend who knows.” She waved a hand and laughed. “We all know each other one way or another. Just being Pohnpeian and living in the U.S. is enough.” It may be that such connections form a crucial part of the basis for mobility and establishment of reciprocal obligations on which community depends.

Though these connections based on weaker ties remain important, the strength of nuclear family bonds can be illustrated by extreme examples involving affinal kin. A Pohnpeian man I have known since 2012 and I spoke during a kava market at his condo in 2016. The three ground-floor rooms—dining room, kitchen, and living room—were packed to the walls with people squeezing by one another, some holding Busch Lights, others used water bottles filled with kava. My friend, his silver-specked flattop hinting at his 60-years of life experience, expressed frustration in 2016 about his drug-addicted stepson who, according to the stepfather, spent nights making mischief and days locked in his room blasting music. I asked what he was going to do about it. With a casual shrug of his shoulder, he replied, “Well, what can I do? [He's]

family.” Likewise, another man of the same cohort I have known since 2012 suffered a physical assault by his son-in-law after confronting the younger man for domestic violence against the father-in-law's daughter in 2015. The injuries the older man received resulted in his partial disability and inability to continue working. When I asked what he was going to do about it, he shook his head and said, “Nothing. He's family.” I note these relatively extreme examples to illustrate the level of commitment to family—and these instances involve relationships established by marriage, not by blood. The mundane aspects of supporting family with commitment bound by consanguinity reflect this pattern, but even more strongly.

These distinctions between consanguineal and affinal mean both less and more to Pohnpeians. During an afternoon lull in 2012, I sat with a group of Pohnpeian restaurant workers at the Japanese Steakhouse they staffed. The six of us—four men and two women—talked about various things, but the subject turned to family, as it often does when discussing things of import to Pohnpeians. When explaining my own blended family to a group of workers in a Kansas City Japanese steakhouse in 2012, making a distinction between biological and step children, the three men exchanged glances, then smiles. When I paused and looked between them, one man in his late thirties turned to me and spoke around the beetlenut tucked between his cheek and gum, muffling his speech. “It makes no difference to us whose child it is. If he lives with you, he's yours.”

Another incident illustrates the enhanced importance of affines as compared to prevailing norms in the U.S. At a kava market in the late night or early morning hours during 2014, a man purchased \$20-worth of tickets in the market's lottery. His brother-in-law witnessed this act and responded with a quick outburst. “Why are you joining the lottery when you still owe me the money you borrowed last Friday?” The first man did not respond, leaving his money in the

drawing and laying his tickets on the table in front of him. Minutes later, a woman cornered the complaining man and asked how he could treat his brother-in-law in such a way. The brothers-in-law did not immediately reconcile—alcohol and short tempers were involved at the time—but I observed more positive relations between them the following week. The larger point of course is the relatively open attitude toward family, including sometimes-truculent affinal kin.

Another example serves to point out the importance of extended family. A man in his mid-thirties ran into difficulty with his job in Kansas City in 2015. A conflict arose involving a personal slight with a coworker and, despite caution advised from at least three sources that I know of, a physical altercation ensued at the workplace between the parties. The employer fired them both. This man's antagonist was likewise Pohnpeian and their fight brought negative ramifications for others' standing at work and within the community; the man did not find another job for weeks and ultimately had to look elsewhere for a solution. A cousin living in Saint Louis connected him with a job there and he moved in with his extended kin. After working in Saint Louis for over a year, the dust settled in Kansas City and he moved back, finding another job in his previous sector of employment but with a different employer.

As we sat in their apartment just off a busy street in a north Cincinnati suburb in the summer of 2016 waiting for her son-in-law to return from work, I asked a woman in her mid-to-late fifties why she came to the U.S. Bouncing a grandchild on her knee, she replied, “To help my daughter and her husband. They need someone to take care of the children so they can both work.” I asked how long she would stay. “Not much longer. I have been here too long and my husband [living on Pohnpei] misses me.” When I asked who would take care of the kids when she left, she pointed to a young woman sitting on the floor typing on her smartphone. “Another one of my daughters came [from Pohnpei] the other day to take my place.”

In 2013 a sixty-year-old woman in Kansas City emphasized the tight-knit nature of Pohnpeian families in the United States. “There is only one Pohnpeian out of all who have come to the U.S. who nobody knows where they are. Everyone else, we know. Even those who marry Americans or black people.”<sup>26</sup> This ethic of reliance on and responsibility to kin and community (*sawaspene*) pervades Pohnpeian social relationships—whether in the U.S. or on Pohnpei.

### **Identity and Group Membership/Affiliation/Cohesion**

Family, clan, and section membership combine with paramount chiefdom identity and result in active group participation, traditionally ordered by section organization. Whether formally organized as sections, as is typical on Pohnpei, or not, as is the pattern in the U.S., Pohnpeian social organization reflects an ethic of group participation. They provide for one another through redistributive activities, and support one another socially through frequent gatherings, particularly during major life events. Rank marks group leadership, often revealed through titles, generally coinciding with age, factoring in clan membership, gender, and birth order.

The following examples illustrate the complicated, relational use of native-member status. One man I know was born into the highest-ranking clan in Madolenihmw, the one whose members are eligible for the Nahnmwarki title. But he was born in Kitti following a general patrilocal residence pattern. He joined the U.S. military as a young man and eventually settled in Kansas City where he lived, married, and had children. He is simultaneously a native-member of

---

26 Pohnpeians primarily distinguish between unmarked, white Americans as *mehn wai* and *aramas toantoal*—black people. They also make note of other ethnic groups, especially Mexicans, but, following the prevailing cultural distinctions in the U.S., usually without direct reference to skin color. The origins of these distinction are beyond the scope of this study. However, I suspect this differentiation relates to both Pohnpeians' observations of U.S. patterns of segregation and differing representations of these socially created and reified groups in popular culture, plus their own tendencies toward strong ethnic identification and segregation present on the island. This history of segregation and differentiation extends before the Colonial Era but may have become more pronounced since Europeans, Euroamericans, and Asians began frequenting Pohnpei.

Madolenihmw by blood, of Kittí by birth and childhood residence, and of Kansas City by long-term residence and affiliation. Saying he is simultaneously a native-member of Madolenihmw, Kittí, and Kansas City seems a contradiction, but he carries these various identities as potential points of comparison and contrast with others and they rarely conflict in reality. Though when he ran for political office from the combined Madolenihmw-Kittí electoral unit, he was required to declare himself a native-member of Kittí or Madolenihmw for purposes of formalizing his candidacy. By claiming Kittí native-member status, he offended some of his would-be Madolenihmw constituents. A sort of mud versus blood identity tension—with mud, following Silverman (1971), meaning land-based—surfaced in this case, whereas the different identifiers usually peaceably coexisted.

Another man was born in Uh, raised in Kolonia, and moved to Kansas City as an adult. Like the individual in the previous example, he simultaneously carries native-member identities from all three. A third man was born in Kolonia to a mother from Kittí, and moved to Kansas City as a young adult. His fundamental ethnic identity is as a Kittí native-member, but he is a Kolonia native-member by birth and residence and a native-member of Kansas City by residence. We could break down these native-member differences into fundamental ethnic aspects through Kittí and residential aspects in Kolonia and Kansas City, with both implying a sort of native belonging by mud and/or blood. In all these cases, multiple native-member and participant-member statuses apply to the individuals.

Though Pohnpeians do not have a word that translates as community, they readily relate to group membership and affiliation that can rise to the level of identity. Pohnpeians use primarily native-member and participant-member labels, with the former implying essential qualities and the latter affiliational. The most salient identity categories include family, extended

family, clan, section, paramount chiefdom, church, Pohnpei state, and Micronesia. For U.S. residents one's city generally adds an available category often falling under the native-member variety of identity, established by birth or long residence. For example, a person *is* a Kansas Citian, a native-member of Kansas City, and a participant-member of the Kansas City section.

On Pohnpei, state government groupings follow paramount chiefdom lines for municipalities other than Kolonia<sup>27</sup> and municipal subdivisions include groupings of sections. Churches likewise draw primarily from certain sections and often representatives on church councils and those serving in important positions feature prominent section members. U.S. housing options and schooling requirements make life for nuclear families easier as compared to the extended and flexible varieties due to rental occupancy restrictions and school district residence requirements. Around half of the Pohnpeians in the U.S. live in a primarily nuclear family configuration and half extended—though those with primarily nuclear family situations invariably will have visitors who stay for extended periods from time to time. By flexible families I mean those involving adoptions and frequent movement between locations by visiting or living with kin, as is more prevalent on Pohnpei. This flexible residence pattern carries an emphasis on extended family, affinal kin, and friends, as well as periodic work groups formed to meet family and section obligations to chiefs.

In the U.S., section and paramount chiefdom membership and identity remain factors but tend to appear muted in much of daily life and social organization without the direct demands to produce tribute and attend section feasts prevalent on Pohnpei. Proximity leads to groupings in the form of frequent informal but implicitly ordered kava markets and more formal and explicitly ordered fund-raising groups. My observations indicate a necessary condition for group

---

<sup>27</sup> The outer islands of Kapingamarangi, Mokil, Ngatik, Nukoro, Oroluk, and Pingelap are also municipalities but do not factor into the present analysis.



membership is that one must be Pohnpeian though Pohnpeians tell me this is not ideally a requirement and that non-Pohnpeians are welcome. However the only non-Pohnpeian I have seen at such functions was an in-marrying Kosraean woman who spoke fluent Pohnpeian—Kosrae is an island neighbor of Pohnpei and fellow F.S.M. state. My experience with markets and fund-raising groups leads me to conclude Pohnpeian identity is implicitly required and participation is explicitly required, making proximity, and in some cases mobility, crucial. The broader order of grouping in such cases is determined by residence in the particular U.S. city. As such, Pohnpeians identify Cincinnati as a population unit and place, Kansas City as population unit and place, and so forth, made clear by people referring to themselves as native-members of Cincinnati or native-members of Kansas City.

Pohnpeians manifest and reinforce smaller networks through mutual assistance in kava markets and fund-raising groups. They also do so through participation in group members' events, such as birthdays and support each other most clearly in funerals. While smaller units identified by place of residence exist in both Kansas City and Cincinnati, these groupings do not typically have enough people to constitute a significant population with broad support and frequent activities resulting in participant-membership identification. The Cincinnati and Kansas City unit levels are not proximate and cohesive enough to offer frequent face-to-face interaction. Rather, they function as broader resource bases and places more like nascent paramount chiefdoms, consistent with the native-member identity markers used. Returning to the smaller networks of people, such groups do not host events as distinct entities or represent themselves in competitions juxtaposed against other population units such as in dance competitions and softball tournaments. In rare cases a city may field a number of competing teams at the same event, formed by smaller groups, generally comprised of networks of kin and/or coworkers.

The primary exception to this general lack of U.S.-based participant-member groups marked by place is the Kansas City section. The section hosts events and Pohnpeians identify it as simultaneously identical with, and distinct from, the Pohnpeian Kansas City population as a whole. As mentioned above, while one is a native-member of Kansas City, one is a participant-member of the Kansas City section. The first requires residence—often long-term, ideally life-long—and the second requires affiliation and participation. Kansas City section membership does not entirely disregard residence; connection with the section and Kansas City as a place can be established vicariously, often through family, or more often through prior residence. As I have discussed elsewhere (Hubbard 2016), and will expand upon below, the Kansas City section may represent a special case in several respects with regard to both place and formal social group.

Whether the formalized section in Kansas City, less formalized, but explicitly recognized subgroups such as Summit Heights, or even the fund-raising groups, the characteristic of *minimin* discussed in the previous chapters applies to cohesive Pohnpeian groups. The term essentially means to exist and act in a cooperative, coherent manner. However, even the weaker ties of Pohnpeians living in proximity to one another in the U.S. and sharing Pohnpeian identity create the conditions of possibility for cohesive social groups. Being members of an extended kin group, or members of a section formed around a nuclear family enhance this possibility further. With initial connections primarily with family bringing them to the U.S., Pohnpeians quickly establish relationships with others of whom they had little or no previous knowledge or with whom they had limited interaction.<sup>28</sup> These contacts allow for job opportunities, mobility, and lead to stronger dyadic connections between individual members of the groups and stronger connections between the groups themselves. As regular interaction between individual members of subgroups increases and they share information, resources, and experiences, the dyadic

---

28 Kallen (1982) uses the apt metaphor of a kinship bridge for Samoan migration.

connections strengthen and the number and extent of their common connections grows creating a simultaneously denser and more extensive social web. These frequent interactions can also increase group cohesion as discussed above.

As these strong connections based on kinship, identity, common culture, and interaction multiply in a concentrated social and proximate physical network, a sense of group cohesion emerges. Technological mediations between people and environment represent both challenges and opportunities in community formation and maintenance. As individual mobility increases, individuals and families might hold membership in multiple groups, sometimes complicating their senses of identity and belonging, though this is hardly a new phenomenon for Pohnpeians (Petersen 1982a:134).

Late one evening in Kansas City in the fall of 2012, I sat in the living room of the basement level of a four-story apartment building—one of a dozen in a complex housing nearly a hundred Pohnpeians. A streetlight flickered through the window that peeked just above the ground, allowing limited view of the outside world. It was that night that I met Nahnei and she and I bantered back and forth in Pohnpeian. As she was wont to do, she turned a playful but stern scolding on a younger person. This was a young woman, about eighteen, her black hair shoulder length, wearing a simple skirt and tee shirt. Nahnei nodded to me, then back at the young woman, saying something to the effect of, “Why does this white guy speak Pohnpeian but you won't?” The young woman retorted in English, “I’m an American! I was born here and I’ve lived here my whole life.” Despite this declaration of independence from Pohnpei, the young woman married a Pohnpeian man a few years later and by 2017 had two children and remained active in the Kansas City Pohnpeian community in general, and in the Kansas City section specifically.

On a trip to Mississippi in the summer of 2016 to attend a wedding, I spoke with a man in

his early forties who had moved to Kansas City in his mid-teens and recently relocated to Mississippi. A son-in-law of the original Kansas City section chief, he and I had met in Kansas City in 2012 at a Japanese steakhouse. As we stood in his kitchen packing food into Rubbermaid containers—food the women of the family had prepared for the pre-wedding feast we were about to attend—he remarked on his sense of identity (Hubbard 2016:169). “I’m a Kansas Citian. I am only here in Mississippi because my wife and kids want to be here with their [extended] family. As soon as I can though, probably when they graduate [from high school], I am going home to KC.” Also in 2016, a man in his mid-sixties, having moved to Kansas City over twenty years ago but then alternating residence between Wichita, Kansas, Des Moines, Iowa, and Cincinnati, Ohio, conveyed the following sentiment. “I’m a Kansas Citian. It doesn’t matter to me where I go in the U.S., I will always be a Kansas Citian.” This man also holds a high-ranking title in a paramount chiefdom and is identified as such by all who address him in public, as well as refer to him in private third-party conversations. These multiple senses of identity and community membership could reflect the possibility for confusion, but also for enhanced flexibility.

Carrying such multiple identities and group affiliations on Pohnpei potentially creates fewer complications versus the U.S. That is not to say there are no complications or conflicts on Pohnpei, however. For present purposes, I posit that, regardless of residence, paramount chiefdom identification provides individuals with their primary native-member identity category and section affiliation their group participant-member status, as well as the associated localized activity. For Pohnpeians in the U.S., city residence adds other possible identifiers of the native-member variety, but of generally lesser import and inalienability than paramount chiefdom membership or section affiliation.

## **Leadership, Family, Identity Categories, and Group Cohesion Traits**

By definition, these population units share at least some characteristics which draw them together as social groups. The table below identifies some of these fundamental categories such as typical group leadership, patterns of family residence, types of identity identified with the group, and characteristics of group cohesion. Each group shares some form of native-member status, whether that be Pohnpei paramount-chiefdom based or other residence-based such as Kolonia or a U.S. city. Bear in mind that some people often claim multiple native-member identities. Sometimes these assertions are contradictory, such as when an aspiring politician was torn between Madolenihmw and Kitti, but most can and do coexist, with emphasis and salience varying situationally. The mud versus blood distinction the politician experienced applies to simultaneously being a native-member of Kolonia and Kitti. One could have been born in or be a long-term resident of Kolonia and thus be a Kolonia native-member while at the same time being a Kitti native-member. Though it depends on the context, the blood aspect is seen as more fundamental and generally more important, in this example, the Kitti native-membership over the Kolonia native-membership. In all cases, however, these are important aspects of identity and group cohesion.

Table 6.1 Leadership, Family Residence, Native- and Participant-Member Identities, and Group Cohesion					
Category	Pohrasapw	Kolonia	Cincinnati	Kansas City	U.S.- Madolenihmw
Leadership Type	Formal section chief, ranked titles	Situational leadership, Primarily pursuit of economic resources	Situational leadership, Primarily pursuit of economic resources	Situational, Economic pursuit Kansas City section chief and titles consistent	Formal section with chief/titles but infrequent, situational leadership
Family Residence Patterns	Nuclear families, sibling sets and affinal kin living in close proximity	Nuclear families, dispersal from siblings, affinal kin, Commute to home sections	Nuclear families, a few members of a sibling set in proximity but Mostly dispersed	Nuclear families, Mostly dispersed siblings, Section features sibling-set proximity	Dispersed in nuclear families throughout the U.S., some KC concentration
Paramount Chiefdom Native-Membership	Primarily Kitti native-members	All five paramount chiefdom native-memberships in Kolonia	Various native-memberships—Uh and Nett mainly, strong Sokehs influence	Various native-memberships Section mainly Kitti but all others represented	Madolenihmw native-membership
Kolonia or U.S. City-Based Native-Membership	No consistent Kolonia or U.S. city-based membership but both exist	Kolonia native-membership, some U.S. city identity from prior residence	Cincinnati native-membership Others by birth or residence elsewhere	KC native-membership, Others by birth or residence, some Kolonia identity	Some Kolonia, all with various U.S. city-based native-membership
Pohnpei Section Participant-Membership	Pohrasapw, Some dual membership in other sections	Various section memberships but Sometimes no section identity	Various section memberships but Sometimes no strong section identity	Various section memberships but Sometimes no strong section identity	Various section memberships but Sometimes no strong section identity
U.S. Section Participant-Membership	No consistent U.S. section membership but some via the KC section	No consistent U.S. section membership, though some via Kansas City	No consistent U.S. section membership though a few via Kansas City	Most with no U.S. section identity, However, many with KC section membership	By definition—Madolenihmw U.S. section, Some also KC section members
Group Cohesion	Regular and continuous within Pohrasapw	Kolonia is an entity but group coordination at lower levels, e.g. work, church	Situational coherence via softball, funerals Summit Heights is consistent	Same as Cincy generally but KC section regular and continuous	Situationally coheres for fundraising / modified section feasts

### *Leadership Traits*

Pohrasapw leadership entails motivating production in the prestige economy, tied to traditional feasting and cultivating the related crops. In this case, leadership coincides with the office of section chief and the ability to motivate group members to act. Though leaders in

Kolonia do not have Kolonia-level prestige economy responsibilities, those who take on leadership status in their families have similar abilities to locate productive resources and mobilize people to work. In this case, wage labor is the typical resource and money the typical results of the efforts. Similar traits exist for those living in Cincinnati and Kansas City generally with these U.S.-based group leaders needing to fill the roles that section organization in Pohnpei typically does, including marking life events such as births and deaths, as discussed in the previous chapter. The Kansas City section leadership encompasses this responsibility in the U.S. context in addition to responsibilities to produce tribute. U.S.-Madolenihmw section leadership generally focuses on tribute-raising activities with other responsibilities falling within the members' groups of residence.

#### *Family Unit Residence Patterns*

For purposes of this comparison, families in Pohrasapw live in dense local configurations featuring sibling sets, but also extended and affinal kin. Kolonia features less-frequent kin-based groupings, despite individuals maintaining links to home sections where family members reside in close proximity. Cincinnati reveals a pattern similar to Kolonia with some exceptions—such as denser clusters of a few siblings residing in close proximity, particularly in Summit Heights. This dispersed residence pattern repeats in Kansas City, particularly non-section Kansas City, whereas section members congregate—primarily but not exclusively—in a few neighborhoods. The Kansas City section itself maintains its potency in no small part due to the dense co-location some sibling sets and a few intermarrying extended families. The U.S.-Madolenihmw section members live in a widely dispersed pattern spanning the Midwest and upper South in the U.S., though in some locations, a number of related people reside in the same neighborhoods. Pohrasapw again features the most typical Pohnpeian pattern of family residence—that of sibling

sets and extended kin residing on adjacent farmsteads, with other section members marrying out and/or pursuing wage labor in Kolonia. At the other end of the spectrum is the U.S.-

Madolenihmw section with extraordinary family dispersal, with intermediary cases Kolonia, non-section Kansas City, and Cincinnati showing considerable family dispersal, but not without exceptions. In particular, Summit Heights in Cincinnati and the Kansas City section show family residence patterns closer to Pohrasapw than to the more scattered configurations of Kolonia and the broad patterns of their own cities.

### *Paramount Chiefdom Native-Membership*

Paramount chiefdom native-membership is based on blood—traditionally matrilineal clan affiliation with tribe—and on birth and/or long-term residence. In looking at the paramount chiefdom native-member category, Pohrasapw and the Madolenihmw section in the U.S. have the most consistent paramount chiefdom native-member identities—Kitti and Madolenihmw, respectively. Kolonia residents by and large feature variable paramount chiefdom membership as do Cincinnati and Kansas City residents. However, Cincinnati is comprised of mainly Uh and Nett paramount chiefdom members with a strong influence by Sokehs and some Madolenihmw and Kitti native-members. Pohnpeians in Kansas City come from all five paramount chiefdoms with Madolenihmw and, especially, Kitti predominating. The Kansas City section also offers a form of adopted Kitti native-member status for its members, though they trace consanguineal native-membership to all five paramount chiefdoms.

### *Kolonia or U.S. City Native-Membership*

Native-member identity in Kolonia or U.S. cities is based on birth and/or long-term residence. Individuals living in Pohrasapw may rarely have some native-member identity based in prior Kolonia or a U.S. city residence, especially Kansas City due to migration patterns, but



generally no such identity category is in play for them. Kolonia residents will generally identify as native-members of Kolonia but not of U.S. cities, unless they lived extensively in a U.S. city, in which case this latter category could apply. Cincinnatians and Kansas Citians claim native-member status in their respective cities and members of the Kansas City section almost always live, or have lived, in Kansas City. Some U.S.-Madolenihmw section members have Kolonia native-member identity and all have various U.S. city-based identities, with a large number living in Kansas City.

#### *Pohnpei Section Participant-Membership*

Residence, birth, and participation determine Pohnpei section participant-member status. Residents of Pohrasapw invariably claim Pohnpeian section membership in Pohrasapw and some have multiple Pohnpei-based section memberships. Kolonia residents usually have active section membership in a home section in their native-member paramount chiefdom. Similarly, Cincinnatians and Kansas Citians often have home section membership in Pohnpei-based sections, though some people in both locations resist section affiliation. The U.S.-Madolenihmw section members generally have home section membership on Pohnpei but some do not.

#### *U.S. Section Participant-Membership*

Like Pohnpei section membership, U.S.-based section membership is determined by birth—one's parents' membership status—and participation, though residence may vary, particularly with the U.S.-Madolenihmw section. When it comes to U.S.-based section affiliation, a few Pohrasapw residents associate with the Kansas City section directly and several do through family members. Likewise, some people living in Kolonia have ties to the Kansas City section, though none of which I am aware are active. A few Cincinnati residents lived in Kansas City, becoming section members at that time, and carry active titles from the Kansas City

section. Most Kansas City residents have no U.S. section membership though Kansas City section members, by definition, do. The same is true of the U.S.-based Madolenihmw section, with some dual membership existing in these latter two groups.

### *Group Cohesion*

Group cohesion in these population units appears as follows. Pohrasapw shows extraordinary group cohesion and group-level identity attaches to virtually all activities. There is little group cohesion at the Kolonia level. Rather shared identity is based on Kolonia residence and group cohesion is situational, based on work and nuclear family activities. Cincinnati and Kansas City again generally look much like Kolonia in this respect but, in these cases, situational cooperation occurs with softball teams, dance troupes, and other specific needs found in kava markets and fund-raising groups. Summit Heights features regular group-level activities, as does the Kansas City section but in more formalized section feasts. The U.S.-Madolenihmw section shows little in the form of group activities but for the sporadic and situational softball teams and dance troupes and infrequent tribute-raising efforts.

### **Group Leadership, Family Residence, Identity Categories, and Group Cohesion**

Provisionally, Pohrasapw and the Kansas City section emerge as the most-similar groups—both having formal section leadership, dense family residence marked by sibling sets sharing common native- and participant-member statuses as Pohnpeian sections, and considerable group cohesion. Summit Heights and the U.S.-Madolenihmw section share similarities with these as well as situationally cohesive groups. However, Summit Heights lacks formal section leadership and consistent paramount chiefdom native-membership. Neither Summit Heights nor the U.S.-Madolenihmw section feature close proximity of extended kinship groups or full sibling sets. Kolonia, Cincinnati, and Kansas City as a whole share a sort of

regional group configuration but lack group-level leadership and dense family residence and sufficient overlaps in native- and participant-member statuses, as well as section organization that leads to regular group cohesion. The Kansas City section is exception as a subset of the Kansas City population, but not the whole. Though these population units do not share identical manifestations of group leadership, family residence patterns, and consistent configurations of native-member and participant-member identities and regular manifestations of group cohesion, they all share some variety of these traits. This consistency of factors points to the underlying characteristics of Pohnpeian social organization. The next chapter continues the more particular analysis of these factors.

## **Chapter Seven: Place, Production, Section, Social Rank, and Flexibility**

### **Location, Place, and Chieftainship**

As the previous chapter alluded to in the discussion of native- and participant-member status, as well as regarding proximity to kin, sharing a location often leads to group cohesion. On the other hand, lack of shared location generally militates against group cohesion, even when relatives live in differing parts of towns like Kolonia or cities such as Cincinnati and Kansas City. This conclusion holds when face-to-face interaction is limited due to distance or lack of shared identity categories and participant-member group participation. Even when native-membership is consistent in a group, such as the U.S.-Madolenihmw section, without close proximity and frequent interaction, shared experiences and meanings leading to strong participant-member identification and group cohesion are lacking. Place status comes through common experiences with, and understandings of, a location by a group of people who assign meaning to that geographic territory as they render it economically productive, often marked by section status, leading to chiefdom recognition and title assignment (Hubbard 2016).

### **A Member of Our Place or a Member of Another Place**

A principal factor that arises from the description of these five groups is the importance of extensive co-residence of a preponderance of group members in a shared place. Whether as anthropologist or missionary, I never had too much trouble recognizing which community was my host at any given moment. Pohnpeians often identify an individual as *tohn aht wasa* or *tohn ekis wasa*, which gloss as “a member of our place” and “a member of another place,” respectively. The place is key, but which place? Most often, particularly in Pohnpei, the place being referenced is the *kousapw* or section (Hubbard 2016). Petersen (1982a:1) stated, “[Sections] form the basic [Pohnpeian] communal and social units and the secondary political

units....” For Pohnpeians, section membership is implied in social life.

Sections typically range in size from 100 to 300 persons, with the midpoint being the general upper limit. However, outliers exist on both ends of the spectrum, such as Pohrasapw on the low end. Petersen (1982a:22) took his title *One Man Cannot Rule a Thousand* from a chief's explanation of a section split, using the 1,000 figure for effect, with 200 being the practical limit before the fission process begins. As of this writing, the HRAF (2017) defined its information on fundamental social units larger than the family as connoting: “the maximal group of persons who normally reside together in face-to-face association ... rarely [embracing] many more than 1000 individuals....” The HRAF emphasis on personal contact brings to mind the concept of a primary group (Barrett 2010), as well as Dunbar's number (Goncalves, Perra, and Vespignani 2011). Goncalves et al. (2011) assert 100-200 as the range for Dunbar's number—that figure taken to represent the upper limit of the number of people with whom the typical individual can maintain stable social relations. Its significance here has to do with the upper limit of group size in which the members can carry on regular face-to-face relationships or maintain a cohesive social unit. Note that Dunbar's number coincides with the upper limit noted by Petersen's (1982a:22) sources.

In August 2014, a section chief provided me a document produced by the Pohnpei State Department of Education titled *Pohnpei Studies in 2006*. This report listed 158 official sections in existence at that time. Pohnpei's population then sat at about 35,000 (FSM 2010). Assuming 100% participation in sections, including children, average section size would be 221 persons. Adjusting those assumptions downward for lack of participation by 10%, and the number of actual sections in existence upward by 10%, as my informants and I identified at least ten then-functioning sections not listed, the average section size comes to 181 persons. This figure falls

near the midpoint of Petersen's (1982a:130) and my estimates of section size and within the range for Dunbar's number.

Intermarrying families tend to comprise sections. Whether relatively early (Cabez & Weyler 2012) or later (Falgout 2012), Western observations of Pohnpeians noted the centrality of family in Pohnpeian social life. Mauricio (1993) asserted the section, as a basic Pohnpeian social grouping, grew out of the localized kinship unit featuring a head of the kin group as leader. Petersen (1982a:1-2) likewise saw the centrality of kinship in the construction, maintenance, division, and re/establishment of Pohnpeian social groups. That said, the institution of chieftainship—and its attendant emphases on social rank and priority on kinship, age, and competence—structures and supports Pohnpeian social organization and contributes to group durability and flexibility (Petersen 1982a; Hubbard 2016). Within this context, place status arises and becomes conflated with group identification.

### **Cohesive Social Groups Exist in Places**

Pohnpeian identities draw heavily upon places for salience, and Pohnpeian places that achieve corporate recognition historically exist in a co-constitutive relationship with the sociopolitical system (Hubbard 2016). When I first joined Facebook in 2014 to more fully connect with Pohnpeians, I used as my profile image a picture I took of the Sawaralap and Sawaratik waterfalls in the Salapwuk section of Kittu. Displaying these well-known landmarks represented my connection with—and respect for—Pohnpeians and their island, with its unique beauty symbolized by these falls. Shortly after posting the picture, I received a friend request from a woman whose name I did not recognize, though she appeared to be Pohnpeian, and featured two mutual friends, so I accepted. She proceeded to chide me for using the picture and not being a member of that section. Though she allowed special permission could be granted,

that could only come from the section and my use of a representation of that place misled people to believe I was a member of that group.

Not wanting to be perceived as disrespectful, I removed the picture, despite having recently come from the island and having spoken with the section chief of Salapwuk for hours over kava as his section members completed the day's labors at a building project. During that time, we discussed the falls and their historical relevance and I obtained permission to take pictures of what I saw, though it did not occur to me to specifically ask if I could use one as a Facebook profile picture. The woman's rebuke made clear to me the intrinsic connection of people, place, group membership, and chieftainship for Pohnpeians. Each interrelates with, co-creates, and marks or reveals the other within a system of meaningful representations of the social and physical worlds.

I have defined place as location with meaning, noting that meaning falls squarely in the sociocultural realm (Hubbard 2016:168). The basic units of social organization, as well as biological and cultural reproduction assume a basis in bounded geographic space. Such territorial demarcations arise through cultural meanings with reference to location. These locations associated with social groups are recognized as places before marking the groups which reside there, and will remain a place even if the group disbands.

One can live in a place without being a participant-member of the group associated with it. Said another way, participant-member groups are identified with places but not all places are host to participant-member groups. For example, the highest point on Pohnpei is a place called *Nahna Laud* or the Great Mountain. This perpetually cloud-covered place receives more rainfall than nearly anywhere else in the world (Hubbard 2016). Nobody lives there but all Pohnpeians know where it is and appreciate its significance. To put a finer point on it, no one is from Nahna

Laud—neither the native-member nor participant-member designations apply.

On the other hand, many people live in Kolonia and work and interact with others there on a regular basis while not considering themselves native-members of Kolonia, much less participant-members. For example, a man I met in North Carolina in 2015 told me he previously *lived in* Kolonia but he was *of* Madolenihmw—that is, a native-member of Madolenihmw. And though while living on Pohnpei he spent most of his time in Kolonia, he considered himself a participant-member of his home section in Madolenihmw, returning there every weekend and participating in section activities. He maintained participation in his section even from North Carolina by sending family members money to purchase goods to supplement local produce contributed to chiefs during feasts.

### **Group Activities, Production, and Tribute**

Pohnpeian social groups in the U.S.—like those on Pohnpei—require an identification of place and utilization of local resources preceding, or coinciding with, group recognition. In Pohnpei, a Nahnmwarki formally recognizes a community as a section. In the U.S., such status seems more egalitarian and appears to be done by acclamation by residents, legitimized as other similar population units involve them in regional activities, such as softball tournaments. In addition to familial and other sub-community level groups, most Pohnpeians in the U.S. derive social support from situational groups forming around particular events and groups marked by U.S.-city residence.

The group activities which predominate include kava markets and more formal fund-raising groups. These assemblages arise from individuals living in close proximity to one another, often connected through work and/or kinship. Though these groups take their charter from the particular individuals involved banding together to meet group members' needs, the



pattern they reflect is that of resource redistribution inherent in Pohnpeian feasting. Glossed as tribute, the excess production contributed to chiefs at feasts is largely redistributed to the participant-group members. In the U.S., this connection between cooperative effort through work, providing for basic needs, and resource distribution flows through the kava market and fund-raising group assemblages. The Summit Heights group in Cincinnati represents a particularly large and well-organized such group—one which has been recognized by the Sokehs Nahnmwarki by awarding nearly 50 titles to group members. In this case, regular feasting and resource distribution happens through the fund-raising group activities, as well as annual tribute paid to the Sokehs Nahnmwarki. On Pohnpei, this process happens through section organization, but this pattern reveals itself in the kava markets, fund-raising groups, and, in stark parallel, through the particular social organization in Summit Heights.

### **Section as Place/Participant-member Group**

Sections reveal themselves as the primary Pohnpeian sociopolitical unit, the places and groups in which Pohnpeians live (Hubbard 2016; Petersen 1982a). Such groups present themselves as natural social formations but the realities of everyday life and everyday activity create this basic unit of society (Petersen 1982a:124). The productive activities of cooperative production and tribute, including resource redistribution, constitute some of the many the economic qualities of community life.

As discussed elsewhere (Hubbard 2016) and revisited briefly here, named sections are the primary markers of place and participant-member groups in the Pohnpeian system. On Pohnpei, the “member of our place” designation implies a fellow section member. In the case of sections, place is synonymous with the group which occupies it. Parsing this statement further, though in general all sections are places, not all places are sections. However, all sections are participant-

member groups and, with few exceptions, all participant-member groups are sections, with extended families including affinal kin generally forming the basis for a section in conjunction with title-granting chiefly authority. Sections combine with place as the basic geographical and ecological unit demarcated and authorized within the sociopolitical system, underwritten by the cultural ideology of chieftainship and the power and legitimacy of the applicable paramount chief (Riesenberg 1968; Petersen 1982a; Hubbard 2016).

The conditions for section status emerge from a biological population unit, usually created by a core sibling set involved in exogamous marriage arrangements occupying a place, utilizing it for socioeconomic purposes, providing access to resources for basic needs and production of tribute for participation in the prestige economy (Riesenberg 1968; Petersen 1982a; Mauricio 1993; Hubbard 2016). The more expanded prototypical process might look like this: a family member locates economic resources in a given place and draws in siblings, then their families to co-locate. A social group coalesces through resource utilization and intermarriage with other groups, possibly drawing in others outside the group's core of consanguineal and affinal kin. Cooperative production and contribution to chiefs at feasts leads to social influence and formal recognition of the group/place as a section within the sociopolitical system, leading to title assignments for individuals and families.<sup>29</sup>

The identification of person and group with place mediated by the sociopolitical system remains crucial for Pohnpeians. A person's title—tied to place and participant-member group—is of extraordinary importance to identity in the Pohnpeian social landscape (Petersen 1982a:133; Hubbard 2016:156). Either explicitly or implicitly, these titles always refer to places and/or

---

29 This reciprocally reinforcing process occurs until cohesiveness breaks down and the group fissions (Petersen 1982a) or dissolves due to disease, dissent, or changing geopolitical relationships. A section can be re-established using the location and/or name previously identifying the place or it might be renamed based on political maneuverings (Petersen 1982a).

sections, without which much of a title's significance would be lost, and in many cases rendered unintelligible because, lacking reference to place/section, it would then become interchangeable with many otherwise identical titles. As the prototypical Pohnpeian social unit, sections order social life and provide key identity markers for Pohnpeians while providing the locus of biological and ecological existence, economic production, and surplus, allowing for tribute and resource redistribution, as well as recognition in the form of titles.

### **Rank Manifest in Titles**

Rank pervades social life on Pohnpei (Riesenberg 1968; Petersen 1982a; Hubbard 2016) as Pohnpeians order one another by age, gender, family, clan, section, and paramount chiefdom. In general, older outranks younger, male over female, descended from elder sibling over younger, founding clan over following clans, and sections home to paramount chiefs and their clan members over others. Paramount chiefdoms follow this pattern with Madolenihmw, Uh, Kitti, Nett, and Sokehs ranked highest to lowest. As one high-ranking Sokehs man living in Kansas City told me in 2012 (Hubbard 2013:29), “Being Pohnpeian is like being in the Army. The older you are, the higher your rank. This is clearest through our titles....” The sociopolitical system integrates all of these rankings, revealing individual social position through titles.<sup>30</sup>

Though titles have histories and carry durable meanings, they are not completely static and their relative rank may change. For example, Riesenberg's (1968:25) list of Kitti section chief titles obtained in the 1960s differed from those cited by Bascom and Father McGarry just

---

30 A full exploration of the relative rankings of titles between paramount chiefdoms and the complex interaction between seniority in terms of age, office tenure, and clan position—related to matrilineal conical clanship—is beyond the scope of this study. As to the first issue, relative ranking, my sense is that a Madolenihmw Nahnmwarki outranks a Sokehs Nahnmwarki everywhere but in Sokehs, and a Sokehs Nahnmwarki outranks a Madolenihmw Wasai—the second-ranking member of the Nahnmwarki line—everywhere, so there is a sort of prioritization by specific rank within this paramount chiefdom-ranking schema. As for the second issue, seniority, this depends on context as well, with deference given to the one holding the highest title generally. However, the highest-ranking person in conical clanship usually holds that position. The oldest person is entitled to respect in general however, regardless of actual rank or seniority, though that may not translate into, for instance, a larger share of tribute at feasts (see also Riesenberg 1968).

three years earlier (Riesenberg 1968:14). Likewise, the list of Kittu section chief titles operative in 2006 that I obtained from a section chief differed from Riesenberg's list in about one-third of cases. The 2014 titles, a list of which I obtained then, differed from those operative in 2006 about ten percent of the time, with some newly promoted chiefs retaining previous titles, claiming dormant ones of personal and family relevance, while the previous title associated with the section chief passes into disuse or to a family member of the departed chief. These quantitative assessments do not include the newly organized sections that came onto the scene in the interim periods, themselves reflecting yet another level of flexibility inherent in the system.

In the social drama of a Pohnpeian community, a title offers a relatively defined role for the holder, even as he or she moves around the social landscape within and between groups. One venue where one's perceived rank becomes clear—sometimes painfully so—is during redistributive feasts (Petersen 1982a; Shimizu 1987). As Petersen (1982a) noted, ideally affirmations of social position, allocations of tribute can be the source of considerable angst and precipitate conflict, sometimes contributing to individual and family defection from a section, even formation of a rival section. Less dramatic reasons lead to movement as well and, in most cases, title follows the person, with section affiliation remaining despite the individual's physical separation from the section. Though it is important to note that most titles—particularly section titles—always remain at risk of forfeiture, some titles stay with the section when a person leaves. As Glenn Petersen (1982b:134) emphasized, the mid-1800s American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) missionary Albert Sturges complained that Pohnpeians could not be fixed to place or property (see also, Petersen 1982b:134). Though people move, responsibility and rank associated with titles generally follow them, including when they move from one paramount chiefdom or section to another, as discussed in Chapter Three.

Titles often become conflated with individual identity (Hubbard 2016). One prominent example includes an 1800's-era Nahnken of Kittu who remained identified by his previous title, Nahnku, despite ascending to the highest rank in his line and second-highest in his paramount chiefdom (Hanlon 1988:93). Petersen (1982a:133) noted one man cried when a section chief removed that man's title. A usually unflappable Kansas Citian had one of his titles removed publicly in what appeared to be intended as a purely administrative reassignment by the executive chief. His visage went from jovial to dejected in a moment even though the chief explicitly stated the man would retain his higher-ranking, more-recently awarded title. It turned out that he had a stronger emotional attachment to the lower-ranking title—the one he had received first—something the executive chief seemed to have not anticipated.

Section chief titles tend to be static, such that generally when a man is promoted to section chief, he leaves his previous title behind and adopts the title associated with section chief status. Despite this trend, changes in Kittu section chief titles occur with some regularity, but always coincident with promotion of a man to the office of section chief. When I asked the second-ranking title holder in a section chief line why the changes happen he replied, “The man liked his title and as section chief he had the ability to keep it.” What this means is that, if he so desires and has the perceived mana to do so, the man promoted to section chief can retain his title as he is elevated to section chief status. Such retentions constitute continuity for the promoted person's identity, which often becomes conflated with title, but change for the section. This is the case because the section's leader now bears a different title than had been associated with this office, often for years, decades, or more. This change also sets a precedent future section chiefs either abide by or alter, which they may do, either to fulfill their own desires or to meet expectations of section members, including reversion to a title previously associated with

section chief status. As I understand it, the executive chief titles are even more changeable, a notion supported by Riesenberg (1968:25). Again, such changes represent continuity for the individual titleholder with a simultaneous upward adjustment of rank. This pattern points to a tension between institutionalized titles, social expectations, and individual identity and illustrates the give-and-take between these priorities.

Paramount chiefdom membership constitutes the primary unchanging identity category by which Pohnpeians differentiate themselves but section membership and participation have a greater impact on daily life. Ideally coincident with residence, the section or sections in which one's parents participate typically determine/s an individual's initial section membership or memberships. Ultimately, people affiliate with, participate in, and contribute to, sections that provide them access to titles, regardless of actual residence (Petersen 1982a, pers.

communication 2016). As titles become an integral part of personal identity, the voluntary, mutable characteristic of section membership fades and section membership rises to the level of an essential quality of the individual, like that of paramount chiefdom membership. Permanence of section identification and, thus, community membership emerge with titles.

Rank seems situated solely in the sociopolitical arena of chieftainship, but requires reference to community and place, all of which are reciprocally influencing categories. Some former communities exist as places only, with prior occupation having waned or ceased altogether—including a number of centuries-old hilltop fortress-based communities—but prestigious titles can remain connected to such places. As discussed in Chapter Three, all titles reference places and are ranked with reference to place prestige within the sociopolitical system, tied to history, and generally to family—who qualifies for titles through which clan and lineage—providing individuals crucial markers of social rank. Place prestige attaches to title,

links with the individual following them as they move from place to place and participate in the various communities they visit or in which they reside.

This process fits the pattern identified by Granovetter (1973:1374-1375). He also noted a community's capacity to come together in response to threats depends on group cohesion and leadership support. In all five of the groups under consideration, social organization is marked by rank. In Pohrasapw, this order reveals itself most clearly following section title rankings. Kolonia residents rely primarily on section and paramount chiefdom titles to establish social rank, but this is complicated by workplace titles, which may or may not coincide with chiefdom-established status. Like Kolonia, Cincinnati features primarily titles which follow workers to their new destinations, establishing some chieftainship-derived rank. The Sokehs titles in Summit Heights represent an interesting variation on this pattern and establish clear internal rank among this group. Similar to Cincinnati, Pohnpeian residents in Kansas City bring previous titles with them and have an even more clear internal ranking system via the Kansas City section. The U.S.-Madolenihmw section exists through chiefdom organization only, with rank established through section titles.

### **Mobility and Flexibility**

Residential flexibility reveals itself through individual and family mobility with titles likewise joining the holders as they move. The Compact, air travel, access to economic resources, even technologies such as Skype and Facebook—especially its Facetime feature—enhance family connections, often simultaneously maintaining community engagement. Pohnpeian community membership and identity remain defined with respect to place, family, and rank established by Pohnpeian cultural principles.

There are marked departures from the pattern of extra-chiefdom U.S.-based Pohnpeian

social organization which typically includes identification by city name as a native-member category and group participation in kava markets and fund-raising groups. The Kansas City section represents one such exception with the Kittu Nahmwarki's formal recognition of the place, along with his incorporation of it into the Kittu chiefdom via section organization (Hubbard 2016). Further, the Madolenihmw Nahmwarki authorized a section in the U.S. under his paramount chiefdom. This section has no designated locus in the U.S., but rather follows the logics of Madolenihmw heritage and voluntary affiliation with the section. With a disbursed membership ranging from at least Iowa to Mississippi and from Missouri to North Carolina, this section's activities are few and far between, a marked departure from a section's ideal-typical status. The Sokehs Nahmwarki assigned around 50 paramount chiefdom-level titles to residents of the Summit Heights, Cincinnati area, regardless of their natal paramount chiefdom identity. Such activity could be read to imply community/place recognition by the Nahmwarki, though no formal incorporation of Cincinnati into Sokehs as a section occurred, in contrast with the case of Kansas City and Kittu.

These three cases taken together reveal residential flexibility with respect to both group membership and titles. The Kansas City section's organization in U.S. versus Pohnpeian territory emphasizes section mobility. Pohnpeian section members may not always reside within a section's boundaries, sections are bounded and have a dense core of members residing in close proximity. Despite its physical separation from Pohnpei, the Kansas City section fits this norm. However, the explicitly untethered U.S.-Madolenihmw section stretches a Pohnpeian chiefdom beyond its typically localized form. The extensive assignment of Sokehs titles in Cincinnati marks another case of residential flexibility entirely—that of a paramount chief assigning dozens of paramount chiefdom-level titles to people in an area not under his purview.



### **Place, Production/Redistribution, Section Status, Rank, and Flexibility**

Table 7.1 summarizes the principles discussed above. Place status generally arises with a group of people co-locating in a given area in regular face-to-face contact as they generate economic production from that territory either in the form of subsistence crops or wage labor. For Pohnpeians, group membership entails resource redistribution, sometimes rendered as tribute, and other times through kava markets and fund-raising groups. Typically, such ordered groups featuring frequent participation obtain section status and become formally ordered by ranked titles. However, section organization, membership, and titles reveal marked mobility and flexibility in the context of Pohnpeian migration.

Table 7.1 Location, Place, Redistribution, Section Organization, Rank and Mobility/Flexibility					
Category	Pohrasapw	Kolonia	Cincinnati	Kansas City	U.S.- Madolenihmw
Shared Location	Most Pohrasapw section members reside in Pohrasapw	Residents share Kolonia location, Return to various home sections	Share Cincinnati, Generally in dispersed clusters, Summit Heights exception	Share KC, but generally in dispersed clusters, KC Section exception	Dispersed but share U.S. Midwest, upper South, some KC concentration
Place Status	Pohrasapw is a Pohnpeian place, a Kitti place, and is recognized in its own right	Kolonia is a Pohnpeian place, Some subdivisions but not sections	U.S. place where Pohnpeians live, Little Kolonia, Summit Heights also recognized	U.S. place where Pohnpeians live, KC also a Pohnpeian and Kitti place via section	Not a U.S. place, No specific reference to a localized place on Pohnpei
Group Support/ Redistribution*	Follows tradition feast pattern—produce-based, competes with other sections	Some kava-drinking groups, church, work, Most participate in home sections	Fund-raising, kava-drinking groups, Funerals and related efforts	Fund-raising, kava-drinking, funerals, Modified feasts of the KC section	Modified section feast but often only tribute-raising, not redistributive
Section Organization	Pohrasapw as an entity is organized as a section	No Kolonia chiefdom status, Residents retain home-section membership	Not a section Typical home-section membership, Summit Heights titles	KC territory is a section but not all residents join, Retain home section membership	Exists only due to section organization, limited residential proximity
Rank / Titles / Leadership	Patriarch of kin group is section chief, son is executive chief, Rank clear, local	No Kolonia titles, Residents have titles through home sections, rank follows	Titles via remote home sections,* paramount chiefdoms, rank Sokehs exception	Titles via remote home sections* Section exception with titles to chiefs kin, others	Titles via remote home sections* Titles assigned within the section
Mobility / Flexibility**	Community members move to KC, Kolonia, elsewhere, titles, identity follow	Patterns show Kolonia to be a hub of mobility, titles from home sections follow	Some anchor individuals and families but much mobility, Sokehs titles	Several anchor families but much mobility-KC, other section titles follow migrants	Explicitly delocalized, ideally facilitating unlimited mobility
*In a typical Pohnpeian community/section situation, this category coincides with feasts—primarily section feasts.					
**As discussed elsewhere, rank follows individual such that a high-ranking title from, e.g., Kitti translates to the Kolonia context.					

### *Shared Location*

By definition, residents of Pohrasapw, Kolonia, Cincinnati, and Kansas City share location to some degree. This shared location, broadly defined, does not necessarily make them cohesive groups, however. On the other side of the coin, the U.S.-Madolenihmw section members do not share location but do share group status. Parsing this category further, Pohrasapw, Cincinnati's Summit Heights, and many Kansas City section members live in

localized clusters. However, people living in Kolonia, Cincinnati and Kansas City in general, and the U.S. Madolenihmw section may share little or no close proximity to large numbers of Pohnpeians within these population units. A core of a group residing in close proximity seems to be a prerequisite for group cohesion and a number of the other principles discussed impinging upon social organization in the observed population units.

### *Place Status*

Another important distinction is how these social groups line up with place status. Pohrasapw is both a Pohnpeian place and a Kitti place based on paramount chiefdom and state municipality status, and Pohrasapw itself is a place. Kolonia is a Pohnpeian place based on its location on Pohnpei and as a Pohnpeian municipality, with a number of subgroups also recognized Pohnpeian places. Cincinnati is a U.S. place with Summit Heights being a specific Cincinnati place, a distinction it shares with the Little Kolonia area. Kansas City is a U.S. place with some sub-locations being Kansas City places, and the region as a whole derives Pohnpeian, and Kitti place status via the Kansas City section. The U.S.-Madolenihmw section has no durable U.S. place status and—unlike the Kansas City section—is not organized with reference to a specific place with local group identity on Pohnpei.<sup>31</sup> Recognition as a place impacts the group's identity and being defined as a Pohnpeian place affects the group's standing as more or less tradition-oriented Pohnpeians.

### *Internal Support and Resource Redistribution*

These population groups experience various levels of internal support and redistribution based on resources derived from their shared locations. Once again, Pohrasapw follows the

---

31 Though the Madolenihmw paramount chiefdom does occupy a geographic place and is a regional Pohnpeian place, its character differs markedly from that of a localized place such as Pohnleng—the place referenced by the Kansas City section's formal name.

traditional pattern with significant, consistent group support and resource redistribution via feasting. Kolonia residents generally experience this in their home sections and have some kava-drinking groups which raise money for local redistribution as well. Cincinnati and Kansas City residents and the U.S.-Madolenihmw section members share these aspects with Kolonia, but with kava markets more frequent than home-section support. The exceptions here are that the Summit Heights group in Cincinnati provides regular support and redistribution through its kava-drinking club and the Kansas City section affects redistribution through feasts featuring goods and cash. The U.S.-Madolenihmw section's feasts so far raise money for chiefs only and do not redistribute these resources.

### *Section Organization*

Pohrasapw derives its existence primarily as a recognized section within the Pohnpeian sociopolitical system, particularly within the Kitti paramount chiefdom geographic location and chiefdom organization. The U.S.-Madolenihmw section likewise derives its existence from the Pohnpeian sociopolitical system but via Madolenihmw and outside of the geographic boundaries of Madolenihmw. Kolonia features no section organization and, as an entity, exists outside of Pohnpeian chieftainship. Its Pohnpeian residents, however, tend to be members of home sections in rural Pohnpei. Like Kolonia, Kansas City and Cincinnati exist outside of Pohnpeian chieftainship and their populations at large tend to be members of home sections on Pohnpei. The explicit exception to this generalization is that Kansas City is also recognized as a section, like Pohrasapw, within the Kitti paramount chiefdom. Though geographically separate from Pohnpei, the Kitti paramount chief incorporated Kansas City into Pohnpei's sociopolitical system. Implicitly, the Summit Heights group exists within the Sokehs paramount chiefdom, but the group members consistently eschew even the possibility of section organization in

Cincinnati, despite their group's ordering by ranked titles, frequent resource distribution, and periodic tribute.

### *Rank, Titles, and Leadership*

Rank, titles, and leadership take on their most and traditional form in Pohrasapw with the patriarch of a kin group as the section chief and his son serving as the executive chief.

Leadership is near in terms of both location and kinship distance, as well as active with titles largely aligning with age and relationship. Kolonia residents with titles have theirs through remote home sections, such that Kolonia as a population unit does not have a direct, coherent ranking system. This is not to say that group members do not have rank and cannot establish some relative hierarchy within and between their various home sections and paramount chiefdoms, simply that it is not direct or coherent at the Kolonia group level. The same is true of Cincinnati and Kansas City generally, with the following exceptions. The Kansas City section features a similar pattern to Pohrasapw but with more members and more-dispersed family, though there are several kin groups featuring most siblings as participating members. Summit Heights in Cincinnati has nearly 50 title-bearing members via the Sokehs paramount chiefdom, but no section and no section titles. These paramount-chiefdom titles are ranked, but no one ranks as chief of a sociopolitical unit recognized as a place, as is the case with section organization. The U.S.-Madolenihmw section does have rank, titles, and leadership but generally in nominal form, unlike the very direct and pervasive Pohrasapw instance, or even the Kansas City section's relatively localized family, ranked titles, and reference to place.

### *Pohnpeian Mobility and Flexibility*

All of the social groups mentioned feature mobility and flexibility. Some Pohrasapw members move around—generally to Kolonia, sometimes to Kansas City and elsewhere—and in

all cases, their titles follow them. Kolonia is characterized by its population's mobility, with most of its residents reflecting the receiving end of home-section migration typified by Pohrasapw. These are individuals with ties to home sections and their titles follow them as they move. The same is often true of Cincinnati and Kansas City residents in general, with the Kansas City section being an exception—more like Pohrasapw than non-section Kansas City residents with regard to connection to a local section. In Summit Heights with the nearly 50 Sokehs paramount chiefdom titles in play, production in the prestige economy is generally not an issue, and it is the Sokehs Nahnmwarki's mobility which facilitated title assignment—following his children's migration to Cincinnati. Though presently localized, the titles received by residents are not formally tied to Summit Heights, but rather to the Sokehs paramount chiefdom, indicating no restriction on movement and revealing the flexibility within this sort of title-holding experience. The U.S.-Madolenihmw section members often carry home-section titles with them, much like Kolonia, Cincinnati, or Kansas City residents, but they also have their own section titles. With their titles not tied directly to place, mobility poses little or no challenge to production expectations at the section level.

### **Place Status, Resource Utilization, and Chiefdom Organization**

All five groups function as communities of various sorts with Pohrasapw and the Kansas City section—both structured and supported by section organization and activity—forming the most cohesive units. Summit Heights provides similar support with paramount chiefdom-level titles substituting for section titles, but it lacks the same sort of motivational potency formal section organization entails. Kolonia, Cincinnati, and Kansas City are generally too large and dispersed with varied family membership to function as consistently coherent groups, but they do provide resources for the families and home sections which rely upon them. Despite featuring

extended kin, the U.S.-Madolenihmw section lacks the proximity, resource base, and regular activity that appear to be necessary for a social group to function as consistently cohesive unit.

In all of these cases, the aspects of location, place status, cooperative production and resource distribution, as well as section presence or absence and unit-level, title-based rank can be evaluated, and are generally present in some form. Shared location and a strong sense of place emerge as important factors in generating strong group cohesion as they facilitate the other factors noted. In all cases, groups structured and supported by ranked titles coincident with the group feature stronger group cohesion and group function. However, regardless of unit-level title existence, ranked titles exist in each group, revealing the mobility of title holders and Pohnpeian chiefdom in concept, and facilitating chiefdom participation regardless of residence, even if through cash and by proxy. In the case of the U.S.-Madolenihmw and Kansas City sections, Pohnpeian chiefdom itself becomes mobile, as applied to groups of Pohnpeians not residing on Pohnpei. The Sokehs Summit Heights group reflects yet another elaboration on title mobility and chieftainship flexibility with the paramount chiefdom-level titles assigned to this localized group. These instances of title and chiefdom mobility and flexibility maintain connections between Pohnpeians engaged in migration, enhancing the meaning involved with their pursuit of basic economic needs and leading to group participation and resource redistribution, strengthening social cohesion.

## **Chapter Eight: Population Unit Comparisons**

### **The Core Relationship: Leadership-Family-Place-Production-Chiefdom-Titles**

Pohnpeians live in named places and tend to form cohesive social groups patterned after sections, based on a sense of belonging entailing simultaneously native-member and participant-member identities. Underlying the native-member identity, participant-member status, and group cohesion is the constellation of factors discussed in previous chapters. These six linked factors endured the various Pohnpeian eras described in Chapter Two, structuring Pohnpeian life throughout this history. These linked elements are leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles. Table 8.1 summarizes their extent in each of the groups considered and a discussion of these findings follows.

Manifestations of social groups in Pohrasapw, Kolonia, Cincinnati, Kansas City, and the U.S.-Madolenihmw section feature many commonalities and sometimes stark differences. The information in the table below is summarized in the following paragraphs. Because this table generally provides a presence-absence or degree of presence label simplifying categorical comparison by group, the following paragraphs break down by population unit, evaluating each through its manifestation of the constellation of factors.



Table 8.1 The Leadership-Family-Place-Production-Chiefdom-Titles Linked Factors*					
Category	Pohrasapw	Kolonia	Cincinnati	Kansas City	U.S.- Madolenihmw
Type of Unit	Pohnpeian section	Pohnpeian municipality	U.S city, Summit Heights informal group	U.S. city, Formal Pohnpeian section	De-localized Pohnpeian section
Leadership	Frequent	None at the Kolonia level but, Frequent via home sections	Infrequent and situational but, Summit Heights is moderate despite being informal	Infrequent and situational but, The Kansas City section is frequent	Infrequent
Family	Dense	Moderately concentrated to dispersed	Generally dispersed but Summit Heights features moderate density	Generally dispersed but the KC section features dense clusters	Dispersed throughout U.S. Midwest and Upper South
Place	Strong Pohnpeian place as a section	Strong Pohnpeian place as a municipality	Not Pohnpeian, Recognized as a U.S. place, Summit Heights a Cincinnati place	Kansas City is seen as a Pohnpeian place, a Kitti place, strong via section	Not a place
Production	Frequent	Moderate frequency in home sections	Infrequent in general, Summit Heights moderately frequent	Infrequent in general, Frequent in the Kansas City section	Infrequent
Chiefdom	Section	No Kolonia chiefdom, home section membership	Neither Cincinnati nor Summit Heights is a section	Though not all identify as members or participate, KC is a section in Kitti	Section
Titles	Section titles tied to place/section	No Kolonia titles, available through home sections	No Cincinnati titles, but via home sections, Sokehs titles in Summit Heights	Non-KC section residents via home sections, Section titles tied to place in KC	Section titles not tied to place
*Leadership – population unit mobilization. Family – density of family residence. Place – sense of place associated with the unit. Production – tribute and redistribution. Chiefdom – formal section recognition. Titles – unit-based title assignment.					

### *Pohrasapw and the Six Linked Factors*

Summarizing aspects discussed before, Pohrasapw features frequent population-unit mobilization through a family head who is also the recognized section chief. The group lives in a

dense configuration of farmsteads occupied by close kin used in continual productive activity for use in the prestige economy with frequent redistribution. Pohrasapw is a strongly Pohnpeian place, formally organized as a section in the Kitti paramount chiefdom. The section chief awards section titles connected to Pohrasapw as a place.

#### *Kolonia and the Six Linked Factors*

Kolonia has no mobilizing leadership per se, and certainly none in the form of a family head, further legitimized as a section chief. Families reside here typically as nuclear units or with some extended kin, but not in dense sibling-set groupings. Though it is very much a Pohnpeian place given its location and its status as a municipality, Kolonia is not a section with no section titles, and no traditional tribute or redistribution at the Kolonia level. However, most Pohnpeian Kolonia residents retain section membership and participation in home sections and thus directly experience and embody the leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles linkage.

#### *Cincinnati and the Six Linked Factors*

Cincinnati generally features this leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles linkage through home-section membership. However, an exception appears in Cincinnati with the Summit Heights community. Though it does not have formal section leadership and is not headed by a chief, it does feature organized, ranked titles—but in the form of Sokehs paramount chiefdom titles. It does not have a particularly dense configuration of kin, but it does have a number of siblings, though not a majority of any sibling sets, residing in close proximity. There is a sense of unique place emerging from Summit Heights simply through referring to it as a distinct area within the recognized Cincinnati area. Further, the concentration of Sokehs titles in this area implicitly marks it out as affiliated with the Sokehs paramount chiefdom—though I have not heard anyone refer to it explicitly as a Sokehs place. Despite not being a section,

redistribution happens with regularity through the group's kava markets and formal fund-raising groups, and its titles are at present localized, though not formally unit- or place-based. In sum, the Summit Heights group looks and acts a lot like a section and may be a sort of proto-section, though members of the group explicitly eschew section organization in the U.S. context.

#### *Kansas City and the Six Linked Factors*

Kansas City has a dual status based in terms of family and leadership patterns on its general characteristics, with an exception for its section. However, Kansas City does sometimes come together to form softball teams and dance troupes, but these come from sub-community levels such as the Kansas City section or kinship groups. Its population is generally dispersed and it claims U.S.-city place status generally with infrequent redistribution, which usually occurs in the form of kava markets, often to raise money for funerals. Though Kansas City is a section, not all residents are section members or claim affiliation with it. The majority of Kansas Citians do not participate in the section or have section titles. However, as with Kolonia residents, they frequently do have access to these aspects through their home sections. The Kansas City section features leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles in a fashion structurally more similar to Pohrasapw than different, despite these units' divergence in location and primary mode of economic production. They also share status as Pohnpeian and, specifically, Kitti places.

#### *The U.S.-Madolenihmw Section and the Six Linked Factors*

At the far end of the spectrum is the section that claims its existence specifically within the U.S. context—the U.S.-Madolenihmw section. However, its leaders mobilize it as a population unit only infrequently, its population is dispersed, and it is not a place. In fact, it is specifically delocalized and does not even reference a particular localized area on Pohnpei, only connecting with the paramount chiefdom of Madolenihmw, which covers a broad territory. It

rarely produces tribute and, more rarely, redistributes wealth, despite its section status and award of titles—though not titles linked directly to a functioning population unit. In contrast with Summit Heights, the U.S.-Madolenihmw section is a section in name but not in function.

### **The Six-Factor Linkage Review**

The leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles linkage provides a clear connection for how cohesive Pohnpeian communities emerge. It also provides a basis for evaluating social groups for likely cohesive group function, identifying anomalies such as the Summit Heights group and the U.S. Madolenihmw section. This approach results in reclassifying the former as a cohesive social group, a sort of proto-section. The latter looks like something other than a section, possibly a situational community, despite carrying the section label and certain key aspects of a section. The linkage appears most clearly in Pohrasapw, followed by the Kansas City section, with individuals living in Kolonia, Cincinnati, and Kansas City implicated through home-section affiliation.

### **The Five-Group Comparison Summary**

A benefit of this five-group comparison is that it reveals a relatively prototypical case of a Pohnpeian community in Pohrasapw—though I do not mean Pohrasapw should be taken as a “pristine” example of a presumed ethnographic present. This analysis proceeds to an intermediary manifestation with the liminal “la Colonia” (Kolonia), then extends to two further-removed situations in Cincinnati and Kansas City. The placeless Madolenihmw section represents a fifth case to be included in the comparison, representing another form of group organization. This approach, following Eggan's 1954 controlled comparison method, attempts to isolate variables with each iteration of the comparative cases, recognizing this is not strictly location-based and small input changes, even—and maybe especially—in initial conditions, can

result in significant, divergent results.

### *Pohrasapw Summary*

Pohrasapw is a reasonable example of a contemporary base case of Pohnpeian community featuring social cohesion, and in some ways an exceptionally apt one. It includes the prototypical Pohnpeian leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles set of linked factors, simultaneously overlaid and pervaded by section organization. It is a small enough section to provide as close to a base case as can reasonably be expected in the real world, not having to contend with some of the complexities found in other situations, such as Petersen's (1982a) Awak sections, which featured internal divisions, intrigue and, ultimately, community fission. Pohrasapw includes the traits developed from an analysis of Pohnpeian social organization. These aspects include: local leadership, a familial basis, place status, cooperative production resulting in tribute and redistribution, unit population in the 100-200 person range, participant-member status, strong group cohesion, section organization, and section-based titles. Crucially, the family head of the plurality—and in the case of Pohrasapw a majority—of section members controls titles assigned to the group that includes his relatives and other constituents.

### *Kolonia Summary*

At around 6,000 persons, Kolonia's population far outstrips those of the other Pohnpeian places here observed. As a unit, Kolonia functions more like a regional community, and certainly not as a cohesive group in its own right, lacking both official section organization and being a much larger unit than Pohnpeians themselves conceive of as appropriate for basic governance (Petersen 1982a). Though people do identify as being native-members of Kolonia, they do not typically participate in a Kolonia-level group, but rather break down into subgroups.<sup>32</sup>

---

32 This lack of unity in Kolonia may have a number of causes, including that native-members of Kolonia carry a

Pohnpeians generally use Kolonia as a base for deriving wage labor to supplement resources available in home sections.

By and large, however, Pohnpeians living in Kolonia trace their participant-member status to sections in the paramount chiefdoms, usually sections where other family members reside, own land, and hold control, or at least significant influence, over titles. It is not unusual for Pohnpeians to claim membership in and hold a title from a section, and sometimes multiple sections, separate from their place of residence. Recall that Kolonia is a municipality, but, unlike the other Pohnpei-based municipalities—Madolenihmw, Uh, Kitt, and Sokehs—Kolonia is not a traditional chiefdom. This situation of separation from Pohnpeian paramount chiefdom residence constitutes an iteration on simple separation. In both cases, individuals frequently participate directly in section activities via relatively brief commute. The difference from the simple separation extends further with Kolonia's wage-based economy, a significant change as compared to residence in a section other than one's own. Due to access to land, this situation often, but certainly not always, requires Kolonia residents to participate in feasts by purchasing goods for tribute rather than producing it directly in conjunction with Pohnpeian land.

### *Cincinnati Summary*

Dovetailing with residence in Kolonia, Pohnpeians tend to emphasize economic motives for off-island migration. These reasons break down into pursuit of individual resources usually in the form of money, preference for the American lifestyle, fulfillment of educational promise, assisting with monetary support of family members, and escaping the demands of chieftainship (Hubbard 2013, 2016). Pohnpeians living in Cincinnati and other places in the U.S. cite all of

---

more fundamental native-member identity in their paramount chiefdom heritage. Further, Pohnpeian Kolonia residents appear to be more mobile still than is typical for Pohnpeians and they lack local family land that can produce sufficient crops for subsistence and full participation in the prestige economy.

these rationales for the agentic aspects of their moves. Like Kolonia residents, however, many Pohnpeians in Cincinnati bear titles and participate in sections on Pohnpei through direct cash tribute, and vicariously through family members, even with their increasingly distant physical relationship to their sections.

Though no sections exist in Cincinnati, at least one area, Summit Heights, functions much like a typical cohesive Pohnpeian community, complete with title-based rank and leadership control of titles within a family. Different from cohesive groups synonymous with sections on Pohnpei, these titles are Sokehs paramount chiefdom titles, and the leadership is more symbolic than practical, an important contradistinction with most section titles and section function. However, like sections, the community engages in mutual support activities, though in the form of kava markets and a fund-raising club. Though Cincinnati's population of around 800 comes in at a level fewer than the 1,000-person upper limit typically associated with face-to-face communities, it is well above that of the typical 100-200 section population which coincides with Dunbar's number. Summit Heights, however, meets this population criterion. The Pohnpeian population in Cincinnati situationally coheres as a regional unit around softball competitions and constructs identity as against other like groups. Pohnpeians in Cincinnati generally, and even Summit Heights particularly, do not claim especially strong group cohesion, though I observed strong cohesion in the latter. While they denigrate Kansas City section status, Cincinnatians cite the Kansas City's group cohesion as a desirable community trait, even acknowledging the section's role in generating this attribute.

### *Kansas City Summary*

Kansas City features at least two groups, breaking down as section and non-section. With an aggregate Pohnpeian population of approximately 1,000, Kansas City as a whole hits the

upper limit of cohesive community discussed. Like Cincinnati, there is a broad identification as native-members of Kansas City and, like Kolonia and Cincinnati, that identity is less fundamental than one's inherited native-membership in a paramount chiefdom. The non-section Pohnpeian Kansas City residents come together as needed in kava markets, sometimes fund-raising clubs, and for funerals for their family members and those of friends. They sometimes field competitive groups such as softball teams and dance troupes separate from those of the Kansas City section. Like those in Cincinnati, non-section Kansas City residents generally retain section affiliation, sometimes titles, and obligations through relatives on Pohnpei.

At a maximum of around 200 persons, the Kansas City section's membership is decreasing in proportion to the overall Kansas City population due to out-migration of some section members, attrition, and in-migration of non-section members. The section remains significant in its influence on the broader community, however. With kinship, friendship, work, and mutual-support obligations, as well as a pan-Kansas City native-member identity binding them as a whole, the Kansas City population sometimes mobilizes around the section itself. These situational coalescing events tend to be triggered by deaths of community members' kin in Kansas City and elsewhere, but sometimes when any Pohnpeian anywhere in the continental U.S. passes, particularly when it happens unexpectedly. Unlike Cincinnati, Kansas City is known for its group cohesion, solidarity, and mutual support. Also unlike Cincinnati, it is known as a Kitti place due to its large, active Kitti population, and more so because the Kitti Nahnmwarki recognized Kansas City as a Pohnpeian place when he organized it as a section. Some people assert he made Kansas City Pohnpeian soil in the bargain, though my sense is this classification only applies when the section is actively engaged in its functions. The section generates regular tribute for the Nahnmwarki and raises resources for internal redistribution, enhancing solidarity.



The successive Kansas City section chiefs made good use of their title-granting authority by assigning titles to section members, particularly to their family members, including siblings, in-laws, nephews, cousins, distant kin, and other affiliated families. This approach follows the pattern Petersen (1982a) noted with Pohnpeian section chiefs generally—they gain and retain power by spreading power through often-strategic title assignment. The two highest-ranking Kansas City section positions of section chief and executive chief are held by heads of two unrelated family groups, spreading the prestige of rank relatively evenly to the different kin groups while offering broad coverage to the families and other section members through specific titles.

#### *The U.S.-Madolenihmw Section Summary*

The placeless Madolenihmw section features membership based on native-member paramount chiefdom heritage but lacks reference to place-based affiliation and the attendant on-the-ground participant-member identity. Its leaders have assigned titles to members and it has a section and executive chief, yet its existence seems comparatively tenuous and marginal. Taking the leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles concatenation as the cohesive community-generating interrelationship of principles and practices, the Madolenihmw section thus lacks common place—of both reference and residence. This lack of place-focus compromises its ability to generate localized leadership and group-based production and resource redistribution tied to place. Though it arguably features the other aspects of the linkage, it lacks the density and regular activity a place-based group makes possible—and seems to require for group cohesion.

#### **Challenges to Social Organization and Group Cohesion**

Pohnpeian communities, particularly those marked as sections, tend to attach to whole

persons rather than individuals' segmented interests. Warren (1956:9-10) noted these distinctions when discussing community in general, pointing out the main factors working against localized communities—specialized interests and economic factors. Though Pohnpeians may have special interests, their focus tends to be more localized and certainly family-oriented. The primary caveat to this statement is that the Compact opened up the continental U.S. to Pohnpeians for economic migration. As the prestige economy became infused with Western goods (Bascom 1948; Riesenbergs 1968; Hubbard 2016) and cash emerged as an increasingly important resource (Falgout 2012; Hubbard 2016), the mobility Petersen (1982a:134) observed as a historical Pohnpeian norm accelerated. Overall Pohnpeian migration lags behind other FSM states with Chuukese, Yapese, and Kosraean emphasis on Guam and Hawai'i as destinations. However, the Pohnpeian rate of migration to the U.S. mainland far outstrips that of their fellow FSM members, while still trailing the other members' overall migration rates, owing to their preference for Guam and Hawai'i (FSM 2010; Hubbard 2016:153).

A community's wider sociopolitical and cultural system may or may not allow for ready adaptation to the pressures exerted on the social unit. Pohnpei's modified prestige economy requires engagement with the world economic system, and, ultimately, the pursuit of cash by at least some members via employment in the U.S. to meet community members' needs. The very impetus to move comes from community-level norms and pressure to maintain family position in the chiefdom through tribute provided at feasts.

However, regardless of where Pohnpeians move, how they perceive their own fundamental identity does not change. If they were born to a Kitti family, they remain identified as a native-member of Kitti. Those individuals with parents from different paramount chiefdoms have claims on both, potentially enhancing flexibility, though not always without tension. As

noted previously, one man related an experience of an individual declaring to run for public office from Kittu, where he was raised, but whose mother was from Madolenihmw. “There's a big controversy about this. The people from Madolenihmw are mad at me because they say blood is most important. But I say, 'Yes, but so is where you grew up. I am loyal to both [Kittu and Madolenihmw].’” Whereas this example illustrates how others can create conflict in an individual holding identification with multiple groups, such divisions can arise within communities. Petersen's (1982a) detailing of a chiefdom's fission represents the clearest example of what can happen when factionalism and more narrow interests prevail in an otherwise cohesive group and its sense of unity breaks down.

The Pohnpeian Kansas City population unit provides an example of intra-community division. Some Kansas Citians explicitly reject the section, though most non-section members hold a relatively indifferent attitude toward it, and even participate in it at times. This disunity hampers Pohnpeians in Kansas City's ability to mobilize as a unified group to address issues. However, Kansas City remains by far the most effective ability to respond as a group to both internal and external needs as compared to other U.S.-based Pohnpeian groups. The exceptional fundraising for Nahnei's funeral exemplifies successfully addressing an apparently internal issue. But Kansas City is also known to raise money for families living in other places when needs arise. The Kansas City section invariably stands at the heart of such efforts, often drawing in friends and relatives to address a particular need. The section has also raised cash for building funds for churches on Pohnpei in natal communities of prominent section members, another example of chiefdom overlaying Pohnpeian community activity and incorporating the church.

Problems of group members' mobility, factionalism, and an increasing multitude of economic demands from home sections, current communities, and consanguineal and affinal kin

would seem to bode ill for Pohnpeian community cohesion. This challenge would remain whether the focus is on sections on Pohnpei or in U.S.-based population units. These issues are only heightened by increased movement driven by globalization, multiple geopolitical tiers, and core-periphery relations. But Pohnpeians, perpetually mobile and always dealing with hierarchy and multiple levels of political organization, navigate the system and form new cohesive groups while maintaining connection to their previous communities, fostering connections with near- and extended-kin.

Though Pohnpeians distinguish between “members of our place” and “members of another place,” those in the U.S., in particular, readily host other Pohnpeians, regardless of their places of origin or paramount chiefdom membership or section affiliation. In a way, this willingness to host is a form of gifting, an extension of Pohnpeian generosity and hospitality—not to mention a form of generalized reciprocity and an application of the golden rule reinforced in their Christian churches. However, such demands could stretch people's tolerance and resilience past their limits.

Some people are members of multiple communities, often sections with their attendant demands for activity and tribute. The persistent movement Petersen (1982b:134), citing Sturges, observed could serve as a further strain on individuals. Such constant changing of location by some group members and split loyalties could drain Pohnpeian communities of human and economic resources to the point of ruin. This result is a particular risk with the distance the Compact facilitates and the changing circumstances generated by centuries of colonialism, foreign trade, nation-state formation, and emphasis on the money economy and migration.

### **Mobility and Flexibility Generate, Rather Than Erode, Community Resilience**

But, so far, it has not—at least in my experience with Pohnpeian communities. Pohnpeian

social groups generally, and particularly typical sections, feature families large enough, maintaining close-enough connections, to avoid disintegration. Roberts and Dunbar (2011) document the intuitive conclusion that maintaining kinship connections requires less effort than maintaining friendships. Family connections continue through technological mediations such as Facebook and Skype (see Musolesi and Mascolo 2006 for a general account), and two-way air travel facilitated by geopolitical agreements in the form of the Compact. With more out-migration to the U.S. from Pohnpei, U.S.-based Pohnpeian groups receive continual infusions of people steeped in Pohnpeian tradition who speak the Pohnpeian language. This factor simultaneously maintains strong community connections, reinforcing U.S.-based Pohnpeian groups' links to home sections on Pohnpei.

This two-way movement provides Pohnpeians in the U.S. access to titles through those they received before migration or new ones assigned, generally in the Kansas City section or Cincinnati's connection to the Sokehs Nahnmwarki. The de-localized U.S.-Madolenihmw section represents a more limited case, but also awards titles. Further, as Petersen (1982a) pointed out, titles can be seen as more a family than individual resource. Accordingly, Pohnpeian migrants have individual vested interests in maintaining their relatives' standings in Pohnpeian chieftainship by sending assistance and tribute. Doing so elevates the migrant, and the family more generally, at the same time as the specific family member being supported.

One Pohnpeian man in Cincinnati expressed an interest in returning to Pohnpei permanently. I asked him how he would fare without having a title. He shook his head and replied, "I'm not worried about that. My dad and brother have plenty of land, plenty of kava. They will let me use what they have and eventually I will have a title too." His father was in line to be a section chief and his brother had a high-ranking section title as well. Family connections

interwoven with chieftainship bind Pohnpeians to their communities as they bind communities themselves. Petersen (1982a) illustrated what happens when these fibers fray, but also how they reknit and revive in new formations patterned after the old.

Dynamic group leadership is crucial. As I have discussed, key group members are often connected by family ties enhanced by in-marrying people and resulting affinal kin relationships. As an individual or core group provides access to ecological and/or economic resources, more people congregate around them, enhancing their influence. As more potential connections exist and actualize, influence increases, often resulting in leadership positions (e.g. in general, Musolesi and Mascolo 2006). In Pohnpei, this status becomes marked by titles and this pattern applies in the Kansas City section, with both its original and successor section chiefs. Less formal recognition also exists for those controlling access to jobs in Kansas City and Cincinnati. Similarly, a skilled community organizer in Cincinnati is recognized by the group through their naming the area he lives in as “Kolonía,” marking it as a Pohnpeian place similar to Chinatown or Little Italy.<sup>33</sup> The Nahnmwarki of Sokehs's family enjoys special status in Cincinnati, in part due to the titles he bestowed on Summit Heights group members, but also through their own charisma and ability, which is linked to their father's rank.

As Brown (2002:10) noted, migration between communities builds social capital in both sending and receiving groups, potentially enhancing the viability of both population units. This may well be true of the Sokehs-Cincinnati connection, more specifically the link between Sokehs and Summit Heights in Cincinnati. The Nahnmwarki provides prestige and enhanced ability to mobilize action in Summit Heights while receiving additional tribute. By having more resources to draw upon in migration, those moving between communities reduce the risks they face

---

33 See Hubbard (2016) for a more detailed discussion of place and how this “Little Kolonia” example differs from the sort of place the Kansas City section creates.

(Brown 2002:9), a principle borne out in practice in Pohnpeian situations. Generally, people do not leave one community, whether from Pohnpei to the U.S. or between U.S. cities, without having a job, or at least dependable support, already lined up in the next. This security is almost always accessed through, or provided by, family members, and virtually always through their, or their family members', social networks. The reciprocal influences in sending and receiving communities, and those pushes and pulls evident in agency and structure, mutually reinforce one another in reciprocal, multilevel causation (Brown 2002:2, 8).

Pohnpeian social groups cohere based on the ideologies of chieftainship and family (Mauricio 1993; Petersen 1982a), mobilizing people to utilize ecological and economic resources available in particular places. The activities the group members engage in create and maintain an ethos of community, underwritten by family and chieftainship. As the prestige economy has changed and the Compact of Free Association has opened up the U.S. job market to Pohnpeians, more and more of them leave their home sections in Pohnpei and form new social configurations in the U.S., while maintaining connection to their communities of origin. Pohnpeians have long-since combined mobility with stable, yet flexible, community membership, often through participation in multiple sections with familial linkages. Connecting people to community by titles enhances community survival by drawing on resources from people not bound physically to their community's location. Home sections become crucial places of reference for individual and family identity, even in migration. The mobility and flexibility inherent in the Pohnpeian sociopolitical system combines with the mutually reinforcing factors of circulating people, money, titles, and flexible group membership to strengthen both Pohnpei- and U.S.-based Pohnpeian communities. Thus, what could be significant threats to Pohnpeian communities—extraordinary mobility and flexible group membership—may be among their most crucial

attributes contributing to community resilience. This analysis turns from summarizing aspects of the six factors of leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles and the related aspects of group membership, cohesion, and mobility and flexibility to comparisons between the specific groups under consideration.



## **Chapter Nine: Population Unit Analysis**

### **Unique Aspects of Each Group**

With the comparisons between population units noted above, this analysis focuses on unique aspects of communities found in each group, based on the following generalizations. Pohnpeians identify locations by place names, imbuing them with meaning (Hubbard 2016). Some places become communities, and all cohesive Pohnpeian social units appear to spring from founding individuals and groups, primarily those with dense concentrations of kin. Group size increases with economic activity, whereby the group sustains itself through connection with—and culturally mediated utilization of—ecological and economic resources, connected to geographic territory marked by political boundaries. Productivity organized by community leaders allows for tribute and reciprocal exchange. These leaders usually become marked by chiefly titles, aligning with family seniority and resource-mobilization capabilities. This redistribution often presents as a sort of generalized reciprocity, though institutionalized redistribution occurs mainly through feasts within the institution of chieftainship on Pohnpei, through kava markets and mutual support groups in the U.S., and funerals in both locations. Competition inheres in feasting and is augmented by community-based sporting activities. In order for the places and population units in which these activities happen to become cohesive groups with strong participant-member identity, sufficient linkage between leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles needs to occur.

Pohnpeian individuals connected with family groups, home sections, chiefdoms, and related places generally move to access ecologically provided economic resources. As they gain access to such resources—historically to produce, currently to wage labor—they bring primarily family members with them, forming largely self-supporting groups extracting sufficient

resources for basic family support, and excess for tribute and mutual support. These groups sometimes aggregate through overlaps—often due to intermarriage but also friendship and work—to form cohesive groups. These groups exist within larger regional networks of Pohnpeians, sometimes distant and sometimes near, groups which can obtain formal recognition as sections within the traditional sociopolitical system. Though there are exceptions, as noted above, sections are generally cohesive groups and cohesive groups generally obtain section status. This analysis turns to a summary of each population unit considered, then proceeds to group the groups and compare each to the other based on common characteristics.

#### *Pohrasapw—Unique Aspects*

Despite its relatively small population and dependence on other communities for new marriage options in practice, if not by strict requirement, Pohrasapw continues to serve as our base case as a largely prototypical Pohnpeian cohesive community and section. In none of the other places is the leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles linkage more clear, immediate, and condensed than in Pohrasapw. The community head/section chief is the patriarch of an extended family, many of whom live within the section's boundaries. He inspires production in the prestige economy entailed in section status, legitimizing his control over his section's titles. Though the extended family largely resides in Pohrasapw, many grandchildren, children, in-laws, and so forth live elsewhere on Pohnpei. Some even live on the U.S. mainland, including several in Kansas City, with a number of prominent non-family section members also living elsewhere on Pohnpei. This community features the highest degree of group cohesion among those considered, with regular section feasts resulting in near-constant resource redistribution.

### *Kolonia—Unique Aspects*

Kolonia principally features ethnic enclaves made up of outer islanders, but Pohnpeians also form groups within Kolonia, primarily based on access to wage labor, markets, and government jobs. Whereas I have concluded that the U.S.-Madolenihmw section is a placeless section, Kolonia is quite clearly a sectionless place. Though its residents share Kolonia native-member identity, live in proximity to one another, work together, and sometimes even attend the same church, they are drawn apart by other forces, limiting the level of group cohesion found in Kolonia. These other forces include paramount-chiefdom native-member identity, section participant-membership, connections with family living in home sections, and responsibilities in home sections, often marked by titles. While the impetus to engage in the money economy draws people to Kolonia, the fact of section-based life and the prestige economy keeps people connected with the institution of chieftainship. In fact, the prestige economy which arises in the context of traditional chieftainship has incorporated the money economy and title-granting chiefs of all five paramount chiefdoms and their sections incorporate high earners into their chiefdoms. This integration occurs at both the section and paramount chiefdom levels as chiefs award titles, solidifying their influence over chiefdom members.

Though Kolonia itself does not show a strong leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles relationship, its residents generally do participate in this constellation of factors via home sections, and Kolonia provides other resources which its residents use in support of their own natal communities. Kolonia provides mobility and flexibility to individuals as Kolonia residents often pursue wage labor, yet remain members of home sections and chiefdoms from which they are temporarily geographically separated during their Kolonia residence. Pohnpeians living in Kolonia may participate in one or more cohesive groups—invariably recognized as

sections on Pohnpei. Those individuals identify as members of their paramount chiefdom and their sections, often owning land themselves in sections in the paramount chiefdoms. Section membership requires participation—personal or vicarious—manifest in produce or facilitated by cash. This pattern identified in Kolonia presents a model for still-more distinct separation from one's natal community—that of individuals pursuing economic interests in the U.S. sphere, particularly the mainland. Whether a partial model for other communities such as Cincinnati or Kansas City or not, Kolonia itself is a hub of mobility, featuring consistent movement of Pohnpeians between places as they pursue economic resources. Though Kolonia is clearly a population unit with many permanent residents, most Pohnpeians in Kolonia—as distinct from its several outer-islander ethnic enclaves—retain strong connections to home sections and frequently return to and reside in them. This option is generally not available to those Pohnpeians living in the following groups, which tend to feature a greater degree of local cohesiveness than does Kolonia.

#### *Cincinnati—Unique Aspects*

Pohnpeians from various areas of Cincinnati come together as a larger unit around softball teams and sometimes funerals, transcending the more typical kin-, work-, and kava market-configurations. One funeral involved a particularly tragic death of a child and drew community-wide support, as well as significant assistance from Kansas City and possibly elsewhere. More generally, families and small clusters of Cincinnati residents—often connected with home sections on Pohnpei—function as work groups and sub-community level populations. However, the softball team in particular both reflects and reinforces a pan-Cincinnati native-member identity, which is additive to other native-member identities such as paramount-chiefdom heritage.

Two related phenomena observed in Cincinnati appear unique as compared to the other Pohnpeian social groups under consideration. Cincinnati's Summit Heights area features most aspects of a cohesive Pohnpeian unit, with at least 100 people residing in that area and self-identifying as a corporate group. While siblings and extended families live in the metro, there does not appear to be the extensive intermarriage between large kin groups noted in Kansas City—particularly in the Kansas City section. Around four dozen Summit Heights residents hailing from all five paramount chiefdoms have received Sokehs paramount chiefdom-level titles from the Sokehs Nahnmwarki.

It seems apparent to me that the Sokehs Nahnmwarki's family provides the sort of social-emotional leadership Warren (1956) noted as typical in communities. As is found with Pohnpeians, as well as other groups such as Samoans, Warren anticipated there would typically be a task-oriented leader in most communities serving as the counterpart to the social-emotional specialist. Indeed such functions are filled within the Summit Heights group. Community activities occur with such organizational efforts, marked by broad participation in a fund-raising group, affecting the sort of group activities and, in particular, involving redistribution of economic resources—a hallmark of cohesive Pohnpeian communities typically formally recognized as sections. As discussed in the preceding chapter, the Summit Heights community reveals a leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles relationship remarkably similar to typical Pohnpeian sections. However, this constellation of factors is not supported by the more-typical dense family residence pattern, formal section organization, a formal section chief, or place status explicitly with reference to Pohnpei.

#### *Kansas City—Unique Aspects*

The Kansas City section emblemizes the process of cohesive Pohnpeian community

formation but in a contemporary, transnational context following the leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles interconnection. Morby Martin's family—Morby would become Kansas City's first section chief—and two other extended kin groups living in Kansas City intermarried and formed strong friendships with still other local kin groups as they participated in work and mutual-support activities. Morby's skills in leadership, family connections, and rank manifest in the paramount chiefdom-level title he brought with him to Kansas City, contributed to strong community cohesion and mutual support in response to individual and subgroup needs. The Kittu Nahnmwarki recognized these traits in both Morby and the Kansas City Pohnpeian population (Hubbard 2013, 2016).

This observation led to the Nahnmwarki organizing this cohesive group in Kansas City as a section, marking it with the name *Kousapw en Pohnleng en Kansas City*, which glosses as The Section Over Heaven of Kansas City. The Pohnleng portion of the name references Morby's home area, a place name connected to him, which the Kittu Nahnmwarki memorialized and used to mark the area Morby so skillfully organized. This leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles connection, featuring mobility and flexibility, culminated in the aforementioned section recognition. The section endures despite Morby's passing and his former title being granted to a successor.<sup>34</sup>

However, mobility, flexibility, and new community organization are a familiar process for Pohnpeians. Petersen's (1982a) exposition of community formation in the Awak area of Pohnpei provides a detailed example in a more traditional context, but also features leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles principles. The upshot of this situation was a section split and subsequent new section formation under a historically important place name as well—one with

---

<sup>34</sup> See also Hubbard (2013, 2016) for more detailed treatments of the historical background of the Kansas City section.

more proximate connections to the location than Pohnleng to Kansas City, and imbued with at least as much symbolic importance, due to its extraordinary prestige.<sup>35</sup>

The Kansas City section has enduring effects, however, and ones that impact Pohnpei. Previous chapters described Nahnei's funerals and the extent to which her section membership and relation to the section chief, in addition to her personal charisma, drew significant support. During Nahnei's Pohnpei funeral, one of her nieces, who had been residing on Pohnpei for some time after moving from Kansas City, heard gossip that her contributions to Nahnei's funeral were being criticized. This disapproval stemmed from the offerings coming in large plastic containers, rather than wrapped in banana leaves and in woven baskets, as is traditional. Nahnei's niece retorted that she was a Kansas City section member—and the way we do things there is different, but the effort and meaning of the contributions are no less for it.

This circular mobility and residential flexibility with regard to both the section itself and to titles generally is borne out with the preceding experience and emphasized by the current Kansas City section chief. He explained that he has people with titles living all over Pohnpei, in addition to his geographically concentrated section members in Kansas City. This is likewise true of the U.S. as Kansas City section members move around the States. Further, Kansas City is the foremost mainland destination for Pohnpeian migrants from Pohnpei and the U.S. Pacific sphere. Many such migrants later move to places such as Asheville, North Carolina, and Wichita, Kansas. In fact, over half of the Jackson, Mississippi Pohnpeian population is of Kansas City extraction—many bringing section titles with them. In a previous chapter, I mentioned one man who self-identifies as a native-member of Kansas City who anticipates his return to Kansas City as soon as possible, reflecting the salience of these factors. Mobility and flexibility generally

---

35 The leader of the new section pushed for using the unmodified “Awak,” which, when ultimately granted, symbolically subordinated the other sections bearing the Awak name (modified as, for example Upper, Lower, Vale) to his own. Awak in Uh, like Wene in Kittu, was once an autonomous polity.

create the conditions for and augment, rather than disrupt, the constellation of factors generating and maintaining cohesive Pohnpeian communities.

Thus, section organization in Kansas City offers a marked advantage over the looser paramount-chiefdom affiliation of Summit Heights in Cincinnati, despite those group members having Sokehs titles. If those individuals move, they remain tied to the Sokehs paramount chiefdom, but not to Summit Heights because it is not the place to which the titles are connected and from which their meaning is derived. They are also generally not bound to a family head to whom they are related by blood or marriage who granted the titles in the first instance, as is the case in the Kansas City section.

#### *U.S.-Madolenihmw Section—Unique Aspects*

In a way, this section represents a step back toward a more traditional section as compared to Kansas City in the sense that it requires Madolenihmw paramount chiefdom membership. Generally, but not always, members of sections are likewise members of the associated paramount chiefdom. This placeless section represents yet another evolution in attempts at Pohnpeian community organization in the milieu of transnational migration. This one was done by organizing via paramount chiefdom identity regardless of place of residence. This section's nominal activity indicates section success—measured by maintaining status as a durable, productive, cohesive group—may be more dependent upon a localized group featuring cohesion tied to place, rather than common native-member identity. This conclusion may be especially true in a situation like this one entailing largely remote and periodic group connections, possibly more akin to regional communities periodically and situationally coming together to address a specific task, such as forming and supporting a softball team.

Calling this section placeless, however, could be argued against as Madolenihmw is a



place too, and a Pohnpeian one with prestige of the first order. But it is not a place coincident with, or tied directly to, a particular cohesive group functioning as a community in the way it is herein conceived—as a localized productive group not exceeding 300 persons, largely sharing a specific, named place. Rather, Madolenihmw itself is an aggregate, an interconnected network of multiple groups existing in discrete places. The density of close kin led by an elder of the group granting titles to those who render ecological resources productive for subsistence and tribute is not in play for this placeless Madolenihmw section, despite its founder's uncontested competence and charisma. Rather, there is leadership, but of dispersed family, featuring situational production, and no common sense of place, despite section status and title-granting authority.

As a contrasting example, an older couple, lifelong Uh residents, visited their high-ranking son of the Kansas City section. In 2014, they attended the Kansas City section feast for the Kitti paramount chief held in their son's large walk-out basement. They participated seamlessly, referring to our [Kitti] Nahnmwarki in a speech, extolling generosity in offerings to the paramount chief under whose power we were then gathered. The context of a place-based cohesive community with dense family connections with leaders controlling titles seemed to contribute to their easy shift to supporting a paramount chief other than their own.

The placeless Madolenihmw section in the U.S. and its marginal existence seems to underscore the importance of localized cooperative and redistributive activity *in conjunction with* chiefly approbation of the group, a shared participant-member identity among its members, and family/section leadership controlling titles. This section's mere existence emphasizes the importance of these last three characteristics. However, though members share common native-member identity and commitment to chieftainship, without the proximity to facilitate regular

productive activities, there is no durable cohesive group. The section itself remains marginal, even in the lives of those who comprise its membership. The resulting status of this group is very much unlike Pohrasapw, unlike the Kansas City section, and even unlike the mutual support of the Cincinnati Summit Heights group. The placeless Madolenihmw section is more like a specialized-interest group (Warren 1956), a situational community like a softball team, or maybe even a regional community mobilizing in response to a specific need or event. But it does not seem to rise to the level of a cohesive community with regular connection, common activities, mutual support, and redistributive events and mechanisms.

Severed from place, or considering its explosion of place via its dispersed population, it seems that this delocalized section likewise stretches community beyond its limits. It may be similar to a virtual community. But we would do well to remember that Rheingold, the coiner of the term “virtual community,” concluded that calling such a remote group, bound by technologically mediated, even if regular, interactions, is better termed an “online social network” (Barrett 2010:121). The Madolenihmw section lacks a crucial place connection—to both a particular place on Pohnpei and in the U.S. The Kansas City section features both the metaphorical link to Pohnleng on Pohnpei and the proximate, dense ties and population groupings in Kansas City. Casting it in maybe the least-favorable light, the placeless Madolenihmw section features some of the negative attributes of Warren's (1956) specialized-interest communities which draw resources away from the groups in which individuals reside. In the Pohnpeian-specific situation, this would include both their proximate population groups and their home sections.

In general, significant mobility and flexibility with regard to titles and section organization exists, supporting cohesive Pohnpeian social groups. These principles manifest as

community members disperse and carry home-section titles with them, and as new cohesive groups form and are marked by paramount chiefs with section status. The U.S.-Madolenihmw section represents residential flexibility of sections taken to its extreme—and maybe past its limit. While it clearly reflects these principles, it lacks the on-the-ground activity and key manifestations of the constellation of factors needed for cohesive community function, despite carrying the generally equivalent label of section.

### **Five Population Units—Unique Aspects**

Taken in chronological order of emergence, Pohnpeian communities found in Pohrasapw, Kolonia, pre- and non-section Kansas City and Cincinnati, the Kansas City section, and the placeless U.S.-Madolenihmw section manifest degrees of continuity and difference.

Chieftainship as an institution featuring title assignment, rank, and tribute follows Pohnpeians to all of these population units. Glenn Petersen (pers. communication 2016) noted, “At some level the actual flow of organization in Pohnpeian life, and especially with regard to titles, is impervious to residence. This runs against the grain of the old residence rules argument ... but that’s what I see.” Section continuity is particularly noteworthy—both in its new organization found in the Kansas City and the U.S.-based Madolenihmw section and its affiliational extension through migrants bearing titles and/or obligations to sections on Pohnpei directly and/or through family.

However, the more fundamental aspects of section principles surface in places that lack formal sections. Kolonia generally lacks sections—but Kolonia residents do not lack for section membership. They exemplify a tendency of Pohnpeians—one which predates Kolonia itself but manifests clearly in Kolonia—to live where they choose for various reasons, e.g., for access to economic resources, to be with affines, and so forth. These individuals retain membership in

sections providing access to titles, regardless of actual place of residence.

Other than Kansas City, localized Pohnpeian groups in the U.S. lack section organization. However, non-section communities reveal similarities to sections featuring the linkage of leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles taking on different manifestations, with practices following the established principles but in a less formal way. Leadership—the ability to mobilize people usually starting with family—emerges in a place-based residence pattern generating excess production used for tribute. This often occurs through family on Pohnpei rendering tribute to chiefs and through redistribution of resources more generally, both on Pohnpei and locally. Local kava markets convene in response to situational, ad hoc needs, and fund-raising clubs offer a more permanent option, open to members of that group only, but extending in duration. Sections cover both of these options in formalized Pohnpeian communities. The institution of chieftainship requires tribute and individuals—and, by implication, families—are rewarded with titles. This process sometimes happens directly in the U.S. and sometimes through relatives on Pohnpei, with the prestige these entail implicitly shared by family members, even those living in the U.S. The Sokehs paramount chief's assignment of nearly 50 titles to members of the Cincinnati Summit Heights community reflects yet another deployment of titles and a sign-substitution—paramount chiefdom for section—in the titles aspect of the cohesive Pohnpeian community linkage. But Cincinnati has no organized section, even though Summit Heights seems to largely function as a cohesive unit, at least at present.

The Kansas City section not only functions like a Pohnpeian community but bears its markings as a named section and has endured as an entity for over a decade. The Kansas City section is a particularly interesting manifestation of, and a potentially promising pattern for, community organization for the perpetually mobile Pohnpeians, even—maybe especially—in the

U.S. The section's ability to reinforce group identity, to establish individual and family rank, and to generate solidarity through title assignments and resource redistribution are notable, even exceptional. And yet the Kansas City section remains a singularity as a place-based section not physically located on Pohnpei.

Non-Kansas City section members in the U.S. or Pohnpei usually judge the Kansas City section as an undesirable, even an unacceptable, organization. Some criticize it for being non-traditional, and others simply do not want the obligations section membership entails (Hubbard 2013, 2016). Some Pohnpeians migrated from Pohnpei, at least in part, to escape the obligations section membership requires. Though, as I have noted, indirect obligations remain, even for migrants to the U.S. A prominent recipient of a Sokehs paramount chiefdom-level title in Cincinnati finds their situation preferable to what the Kansas City section provides, with Cincinnati's lack of a formal local section but having the higher-ranking paramount chiefdom titles. “The Nahnmwarki is less demanding than a section chief. He only asks for tribute once a year, but a section chief is always asking you to do something.” I asked whether he would join a section in Cincinnati if the Sokehs paramount chief organized one. He said he would not. I asked other community members the same question and their responses were similar, regardless of paramount chiefdom membership or receipt of titles from the Sokehs Nahnmwarki. They might participate in a local Cincinnati section from time to time but they would not become members or accept a title—specifically because of the obligations section versus paramount chiefdom title acceptance entails.

However, I would argue that the Kansas City section offers more certainty in terms of obligations to chiefs and community, as well as more of a buffer between individuals and the demands of chiefs, than eschewing direct section membership ultimately does. In Cincinnati,

those bearing Sokehs titles owe the Sokehs Nahnmwarki directly for their title and he therefore has much more direct access to them than is typical of the Pohnpeian system where the section chief occupies a structural position between most people and the paramount chief. A section chief observed that a Nahnmwarki “has no people,” rendering him dependent on section chiefs to mobilize the population. He also serves as the social-emotional specialist in a community (Warren 1956:11), negotiating conflicts, softening demands, advocating for his people. In my experience, the Kansas City section chief does all this and more.

The Sokehs Nahnmwarki has found a way around this general statement about direct access to people as it applies to localized populations through the titles he conferred in the Summit Heights community. It is far from unusual for a paramount chief to assign titles to individuals directly, but such assignment is generally more dispersed in pattern, usually but not always, within his paramount chiefdom, and specifically not pervasive in a localized group. That pattern is reserved for section titles. In the Kansas City section, the expectations of the Nahnmwarki of Kittu are mediated by the Kansas City section chief who, himself, works to produce kava and other products, drawing on his kin connections, in addition to non-kin section members for support. His ability to motivate action is most definitely enhanced by his control over—and actual granting of—titles to his kin and other community members. The Cincinnati situation is a bit more atomized with less-dense kin residence and the Nahnmwarki's direct access to individuals.

### **The Five Population Units Grouped by Common Traits**

With the unique aspects of these groups noted above, this discussion turns to some lines along which these populations can be grouped. Cincinnati, Kansas City, and the U.S.-Madolenihmw section all form in the continental U.S. Kolonia, Cincinnati, and Kansas City all

provide access to wage labor and larger Pohnpeian populations. Pohrasapw, the Kansas City section, and Summit Heights feature varying degrees of densely clustered populations marked by localized title assignments. Finally, Pohrasapw, Kansas City, and the U.S.-Madolenihmw section all share section status.

*Cincinnati, Kansas City, and the U.S.-Madolenihmw Section*

When I started this dissertation, I anticipated concluding that section status equated to strong group cohesion and, absent section organization, social organization would be invariably loose. The Kansas City section's extraordinary group cohesion supported this provisional finding. However, two wrenches monkeyed up the proverbial works. The first is the U.S.-Madolenihmw section, which does not feature strong group cohesion found in most sections. The second is the Summit Heights group, which displays many observable characteristics similar to sections.

Despite the overall positive feelings and corporate activities in the Cincinnati Summit Heights community, I did not hear anyone speak of Summit Heights—much less Cincinnati as a whole—as having exceptional group cohesion, the sort of solidarity for which Kansas City, particularly the section, is known. This admission was true even by those in Cincinnati who cast aspersions on the Kansas City section. However, considerable solidarity was clear in Summit Heights, evident in their fund-raising efforts and resulting resource redistribution, as well as comments that they are “like family” in their community. Though it is clearly a diasporic Pohnpeian community in the general sense, I did not hear anyone speak of Cincinnati as a Pohnpeian place, as they do Kansas City. With the Sokehs Nahnmwarki granting so many titles and frequently visiting the area, it seems quite possible that Cincinnati may, in time, become known as a Pohnpeian—particularly a Sokehs—place, though not yet.

In the Kansas City section and Summit Heights, Cincinnati, we have two residentially

flexible situations. The first aspect of residential flexibility is titles, as migrants bring titles with them but, more uniquely, we find a concentration of newly awarded titles to migrants in both locations. This occurs in Kansas City—mostly, but not exclusively—via the section and section chief, underwritten by the Kittu Nahnmwarki, and in Cincinnati—again mostly, but not exclusively—directly from the Sokehs Nahnmwarki. The second aspect of residential flexibility is section organization, present in Kansas City, absent in Cincinnati. The question then becomes what difference this second aspect of flexibility makes. Is the section a “difference which makes a difference” (Bateson 2000:457-459)?

By their own admission, Cincinnati residents state that, by comparison, they do not have the degree of group cohesion that Kansas City has, and they attribute this to formal Kansas City section organization. They find Kansas City to be a more traditional group than other Pohnpeians in the U.S., maintaining closer ties to Pohnpei—though I would argue the Sokehs paramount chief's conferring of titles has implicitly enhanced Cincinnati's ties to Pohnpei. Pohnpeians in Cincinnati agree with those in Kansas City and elsewhere that Kansas City is a Pohnpeian, specifically a Kittu, place, and that the section lies at the heart of all of these important differences. The upshot is that Kansas City mobilizes as a group to address community members' needs more effectively and universally than Pohnpeians in Cincinnati and elsewhere experience, maintaining a more traditionally Pohnpeian identity that requires mutual support, and leadership which impels people to provide it. This occurs in a location explicitly identified as a Pohnpeian place. I am tempted to conclude that granting titles to residents of a location—even by a Nahnmwarki—does not create a place or a cohesive group, but making it a section does.

A third instance of residential flexibility, with a different mix of variables in the U.S.-Madolenihmw section, warrants further comparison. Here we have formal section organization



and section titles, but no place. Cincinnati is a place Pohnpeians live but is not a Pohnpeian place, a position I have asserted elsewhere and explained at some length (Hubbard 2016), and it lacks section organization and the formal leadership this status entails. The Kansas City section is a Pohnpeian place and a Pohnpeian section, generating a unique sense of group solidarity and community efficacy—manifest in service, tribute, and redistribution—facilitated by leadership of chiefs and ranked titles. Despite its organization as chiefdom, the U.S.-Madolenihmw section does not generate the sort of cohesive group with which section status generally coincides because it lacks effective mobilization of labor to produce tribute and redistribution from a group sharing location and reference to place.

#### *Kolonia, Cincinnati, and Kansas City*

These population units emerge as broader social configurations, ones which primarily support smaller localized subgroups and distant home sections. Each also supports localized cohesive groups of varying salience within their borders, interestingly each of which exists with reference to paramount chiefdoms from which these cohesive groups are separated. However, taken as population units themselves, Kolonia, Cincinnati, and Kansas City do not function as cohesive units, though Kansas City can at times.

All three of these larger social units—Kolonia, Kansas City, and Cincinnati—foster access to economic resources in the form of wage labor. As individuals garner these resources, some of these monetary benefits ripple back through the leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles linkage via individuals' proximate or remote communities and home sections. Preexisting both Cincinnati and Kansas City, Kolonia serves as an implicit prototype for facilitating community organization separated from the paramount chiefdoms with which they are affiliated and for providing resources to residents' remote home communities. In all three

situations, we see mobility and flexibility in title-holding individuals' residence, and in Kansas City, formal section organization. As noted above, Summit Heights looks a lot like a section, despite lacking formal recognition as such.

*Pohrasapw, the Kansas City Section, and Summit Heights*

Cincinnati and Kansas City, taken as broader population units, resemble Kolonia in several respects. Likewise, Summit Heights and especially the Kansas City section, reflect aspects of cohesive community found in Pohrasapw, with its clear and prototypical leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles structure. Summit Heights also differs from Pohrasapw in important respects. Unlike Pohrasapw, which is a Kitti section, Summit Heights is not a formal chiefdom in its own right, but rather happens to be a group of people living in close proximity who all have paramount chiefdom titles from Sokehs. There is neither a section nor executive chief whose authority extends to—and, in part, derives from—the place and its people. Rather, the organization of Summit Heights such as it is, functions in a top-down fashion via the Sokehs paramount chief's award of titles. The family-based bottom-up foundation of typical Pohnpeian sections is not clear here, if it exists at all. Summit Heights may implicitly be a Sokehs place, but it is not so marked or explicitly recognized as such. In short, Summit Heights shares a number of apparent characteristics with Pohrasapw but lacks many of them formally. Though, like Pohrasapw, Summit Heights appears to function as a cohesive group—at least for the time being.

The Kansas City section shares more characteristics with Pohrasapw than does Summit Heights, revealing both functional and formal aspects of cohesive Pohnpeian communities. However, the Kansas City section's frequent mobilization by chiefs appears much less frequent when compared to Pohrasapw and viewed strictly through the lens of the traditional Pohnpeian feasting cycle. This difference derives in part from its physical separation from Pohnpei and the

economic resources being primarily wage labor versus produce. Work schedule requirements of employers and lack of land and access to recognized crops and livestock—primarily kava, breadfruit, yams, and pigs—foreclose the option of Kansas City section participation in the full feasting cycle. Kansas City section members' ubiquitous access to wage labor marks another significant difference between the Kansas City section and Pohrasapw, enabling them to assist distant kin via cash, enhancing mobility and flexibility generally.

#### *Pohrasapw, Kansas City, and the U.S.-Madolenihmw Section*

Another grouping which shares common traits is that of Pohrasapw, the Kansas City section, and the U.S.-Madolenihmw section as each is formally organized as a section. This formal similarity constitutes most of what Pohrasapw shares with the others, particularly the U.S.-Madolenihmw section. Similarities between Pohrasapw and the Kansas City section are discussed elsewhere but factoring the U.S.-Madolenihmw section into the mix provides another point of comparison.

Looking at the similarities and differences in these three sections leads to two primary conclusions. First, section organization is extraordinarily flexible. Second, section organization in and of itself is not sufficient to generate strong group cohesion. The first conclusion is relatively intuitive based on location alone as sections arose in a milieu quite different from that of the continental United States. The typical section and base case throughout this study has been Pohrasapw. The next few paragraphs will address the second conclusion.

Like Pohrasapw, the Kansas City section marks a group of people with kin groups at the center who live in relative proximity to one another. Also like Pohrasapw, Kansas City section members share participant-member identity, reinforced by regular activity, shared location, and a strong sense of place tied to section. Unlike Pohrasapw, where virtually all members are from

Kitti, Kansas City section members have variable Pohnpeian native-member identities. Despite a concentration of Kitti, Madolenihmw, and Uh native-membership, people from Sokehs and Nett are also Kansas City section members. However, they all share Kansas City native-member identity. The Kansas City section shares with Pohrasapw all facets of the leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles constellation of factors.

The U.S.-Madolenihmw section members, like those of Pohrasapw, share discrete Pohnpeian native-member paramount chiefdom identity. They also share participant-membership but, unlike both Pohrasapw and Kansas City, this status is not reinforced by frequent cooperative activity, shared proximity, or sense of place. In short, group cohesion is lacking as, despite being marked by section status—that prototypical marker of Pohnpeian community—the U.S.-Madolenihmw section lacks the shared place and production aspects of the leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles linkage. Further, dense concentration of family and affines are lacking as well. This comparison strengthens the conclusion that formal section organization, while generally necessary—see Summit Heights for a provisional exception—is not sufficient for creating strong group cohesion. Rather, a combination of leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles flexibly applied is, noting that section membership generally obtains.

### **Pohnpeian Mobility and Community Membership Flexibility**

Pohnpeian communities feature marked flexibility with regard to residence. This flexibility and mobility—facilitated by family and chiefdom membership—reveal themselves as people move and their titles move with them, as well as when chiefs assign titles to people residing outside of their chiefdoms. These traits also reveal themselves as sections form, fade, reform, and fission (Petersen 1982a), sometimes in off-island situations such as the short-lived attempts in Guam and Hawai'i (Hubbard 2016), the marginally active delocalized, placeless

Madolenihmw section, or the now decade-old Kansas City section. In an important sense, the Kansas City section is in Kittu, with Kansas City recognized as a Kittu place, and the stronger version still claiming it as Kittu land. Summit Heights seems to function as a cohesive group, though it lacks several formal aspects typical in Pohnpeian communities. Regardless of actual location, community membership with residential flexibility exists in each of the five main cases observed in Pohrasapw, Kolonia, Cincinnati, Kansas City, and the U.S.-Madolenihmw, along with the two subgroups discussed—the Kansas City section, and Summit Heights.

Even for those non-section Kansas City, non-Summit Heights Cincinnati, and U.S.-Madolenihmw residents, mobility and flexibility allow for community membership, accomplished by migrants bringing titles with them and remotely participating in home sections. The U.S.-Madolenihmw section and the Kansas City section reveal the flexibility and mobility of formal section organization. Summit Heights and the Kansas City section reveal flexibility in Pohnpeian community function supported by the leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles constellation of factors.

However, the more pervasive residential flexibility remains with title-holder mobility, followed by latitude for chiefs with title-conferring authority. Many Pohnpeians living in the U.S. continue to hold titles from home sections and even paramount chiefdoms—despite separation from those places and their associated polities. The Kansas City section chief himself observed he has title holders living all over Pohnpei and the U.S. Section chiefs and paramount chiefs confer titles on people visiting their sociopolitical units or onto those living in other places the chiefs visit.<sup>36</sup> For instance, when I went to Pohrasapw in 2014, the section chief, Soulik en Pohrasapw, granted me a title. When I discussed this with the Kansas City section chief, who

---

<sup>36</sup> My sense is this does not generally occur when chiefs visit another chiefdom in which they are a guest, though there may well be exceptions to this generalization. Such actions seem likely to generate hard feelings as the following anecdote suggests.

then physically resided in the area adjacent to Pohrasapw, he was unable to mask his displeasure—though he allowed but a momentary glimpse and made no direct comment. I pressed him about his reaction and he reconciled what had clearly registered to him as a perceived slight by concluding that when I was on Pohnpei, I would act as a Pohrasapw section member but when in the U.S., I would fulfill my responsibilities as a Kansas City section member.

This response emphasizes that context matters as it relates to section membership and title-holder responsibility as I clearly carry both titles whether in the U.S. or on Pohnpei, but one or the other may be more salient at a given time. A visiting section chief conferred section titles on some Cincinnati residents and, as detailed above, the Sokehs paramount chief assigned titles there as well. Unlike Kansas City which is marked by the Kansas City-Kitti section, it is likely significant that Cincinnati is a sort of unincorporated place, thus making Cincinnati residents “fair game” for visiting chiefs of any section or paramount chiefdom who can work through the leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles linkage.

This distinction indicates an important difference between Kansas City and Cincinnati, specifically with regard to official section membership. I have argued that both provide regional resource bases and native-member community status. Further, both host more cohesive groups pervaded by systematic title assignment—the Kansas City section via Kitti and Summit Heights by the Sokehs Nahnmwarki. Kansas City is regarded by virtually all Pohnpeians as a Pohnpeian place, specifically a Kitti place. However, Cincinnati is not a Pohnpeian place, much less a specifically Sokehs place. Kansas City is identified as having a unique degree of group solidarity, mobilizing people at an effective level far exceeding the ability of other communities in the U.S., despite some of these places hosting hundreds of Pohnpeians, likely having populations

constituting cohesive groups in some cases. In short, section organization—chiefdom status conferred on a group, marking participant-member belonging—legitimates, overlays, and infuses kinship and proximate residential networks engaged in corporate productive and redistributive activities with a paramount chief's mana. This combination of factors—rather than section status alone—appears to be “a difference which makes a difference” (Bateson 2000:457-459) with regard to durable cohesive group status and community efficacy.

## **Chapter Ten: Conclusion**

### **Overall Context**

This dissertation has considered contemporary Pohnpeian populations in five social groups: Pohnpeians living in Pohrasapw and Kolonia on Pohnpei and Cincinnati and Kansas City in the U.S., with a fifth group, the U.S.-Madolenihmw section, claiming members in various places. Each of these population units draws on place-specific resources while carving out an existence in their nested but interconnected situations, all impacted by migration. The broad sweep of this exercise acknowledges the “intersection of global, national, regional, and local systems ... the outcome of the interaction of multiple levels and multiple factors” (Kottak 1999:23). These levels and factors include American geopolitics, American colonialism, and core-periphery relations, as well as global capitalism, and embedded ecological relationships. The deeper context includes the flexible yet durable—possibly durable because flexible—Pohnpeian principles and institutions in play, with their often deep and rich histories. These five groups rely on multiple levels of interconnection and reveal an accelerating and expanding mobility coupled with increased encounter with other, often very different, cultures and peoples.

The U.S.-FSM Compact of Free Association sets the stage for Pohnpeian migration to the U.S. mainland—primarily driven by economic considerations. Though the U.S., unlike many EU nations, generally lacks specific policies aimed at migrant integration and assimilation, it is ideally open to, and expects at least a degree of, migrant assimilation. However, ethnic enclaves still form in the U.S., and though Pohnpeian groups may not cluster in exclusive communities like some others forming, for example, a Little Italy or Chinatown, Pohnpeians do tend to congregate as groups, reflecting a number of patterns established on Pohnpei. These prototypical patterns on Pohnpei include dispersed residence on productive farmsteads that cluster by family,



aggregating to form groups of often-related families overlaid by section organization, marking corporate participant-membership (Riesenberg 1968; Petersen 1982a; Hubbard 2016). The individuals and families comprising these corporate groups conduct redistributive and other activities contributing to mutual support, such as funerals, marked by often-competitive community feasts. This sort of organization and the related social activities in a cohesive group are infused by titles awarded by a local leader, who is frequently the head of the family with the most members in the group. While the exact translation of these patterns from Pohnpei to the U.S. does not occur, many such principles resurface in modified form following the leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles constellation of factors.

Based on group membership rooted in territory made meaningful as a place within a particular cultural system, from which a population of often-related individuals draws material support, a cohesive group provides several functions—as shaped by the community's cultural resources. These groups repeat throughout societies featuring political order, often conceived as bounded and constructed in opposition to other similar communities (Cohen 2011). Cohesive groups are nested in regional networks of communities, connected with similar groups—often in varying or alternating degrees of conflict, or at least competition, and cooperation. A community serves as the basic unit for reproducing the population, while observing marriage restrictions, as well as the culture of the group, providing meaning and order to the activities necessary for economic production drawn from the ecological resources the place provides. Typically the group will not exceed Dunbar's number—currently conceived to be around 200 persons (Goncalves et al. 2011), though communities may reach as many as 1,000 (HRAF 2017)—and will usually feature local leadership, often divided into social-emotional and task-oriented roles (Warren 1956:11). Such community patterns are found both in U.S. Pohnpeian groups and, quite

clearly, in Pohnpeian section organization with average section size ranging from 100 to 200 persons featuring diarchal leadership in the form of the section chief and executive chief.

### **Cohesive Pohnpeian Groups**

Such patterns of social organization and activity have deep roots in Pohnpeian history (Bernart 1977; Hanlon 1988; Mauricio 1993), reaching into the more recent past (Cabez & Weyler 2012; Riesenbergs 1968; Petersen 1982a), as well as to relatively contemporary times (Petersen 2009; Falgout 2012; Hubbard 2016). These principles include the interconnected relationships of leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles, yielding groups marked as sections, prototypical Pohnpeian cohesive groups based on this linkage. These communities cohere through activities, particularly when engaging in redistribution of production and other mutual support, with these efforts often coalescing in section feasts.

Cohesive Pohnpeian groups emerge through individuals and families living in—and with reference to—places, underwritten by common identity, particularly group belonging, and membership in both its essential native-member (*mehn*) and affiliational participant-member (*tohn*) manifestations. This group orientation ideally leads to, and/or grows from, an ethic of group cohesion and individual belonging, demonstrated by productivity revealed in tribute to chiefs, fund-raising, redistribution, and competition, often evident in section feasts. Events involving competitive tribute perform group identity, set against other individuals and comparable groups, enacting unity through opposition, displaying cooperative effort to others, whereas the redistributive aspects display unity through affection and inward cooperative effort. At higher-level orders of community, the competitive giving can also lead to redistribution through tribute, reinforcing an ethic of higher-level—such as regional—group identity, on Pohnpei often native-member paramount chieftdom identity or regional membership such as in

Kolonia. Sometimes these activities involving competition and cooperation can be one and the same, particularly with section feasts.

### **Complicating and Reconciling Factors—Mobility and Flexibility**

In the mid-1800s, the ABCFM missionary, Albert Sturges, lamented Pohnpeian mobility, noting they could not be fixed to place or property (Petersen 1982a:134). In a straightforward theoretical conception where a person moving away from a community removes that person from participation in the community, the effect of this motion on place-based Pohnpeian social organization should be disastrous. This expectation would particularly be the case when considering the centrality of place-based section titles to individual and family identity. With the vast majority of titles directly controlled by section chiefs, who almost always reside within their section borders, one would expect a fairly strict connection, possibly even a coincidence, between titles and physical residence. The impact of this straightforward, theoretical location-based relationship would be that individuals would need to reside in the place/section where the titles are administered, and, if individuals moved, their titles would be forfeit. In practice, family members tend to receive a degree of preference from section chiefs who balance the need to incorporate non-family and particularly productive and influential others with reinforcing family bonds through titles. Accordingly, if one's kin controls section titles in a section separate from one's place of residence, claiming or receiving membership in that section—and affiliation with that place and belonging in that community—usually provides more ready access to titles and their accompanying social rank.

The ideal residence-section alignment gives way to an observed combination of residence- and kinship-section alignment. The latter reality makes sense when considering the commitment one owes to kin and its relative emphasis in the Pohnpeian cultural system. If you

have to help kin anyway, and you already share family and essential native-member identity with them, you may as well help those who can reward your efforts with titles as you affiliate with and participate in group activities, becoming a participant-member of the section. This line of thinking follows Glenn Petersen's explanation of the seemingly contradictory situation described in the previous paragraph (Petersen, pers. communication 2016):

From early on, I was trying to make sense of relations among titles, land, and kin groups in contemporary *kousapws* [sections]. With the German land tenure rules favoring patriline and patrilocality, while access to titles in theory retained a matri-bias, what I could see happening was that people were opting to remain members of a *kousapw* [section] where they had access to titles, even if they were living elsewhere. This seemed problematic in theory, but not in practice.

Petersen's observations emphasize the flexibility inherent in the Pohnpeian system with its leadership-family-place-production-chieftdom-titles structural linkage.

As a place of residence but also a point of reference, the concept and experience of place is flexible. It extends both to physical location as both a point of reference for all community/section members, but actual residence for only some (Hubbard 2016:168). This dual nature of place as residence/reference connects with the two types of residential flexibility entailed in chieftainship—title-holder mobility and section organization in the U.S. Title-holding section members move around Pohnpei and the U.S. while retaining section membership and reference to places embodied in home sections. Section organization is mobile, applied to a place where section members reside, for example, in Kansas City, creating a Pohnpeian place to which titles are connected.

As the previous paragraph emphasizes, the Compact further unfetters Pohnpeians' tendency toward mobility to destinations well beyond their historical limits. Motives for mobility include pursuit of self-determination, flexibility, economic resources, and social position, with

this last aspect typically evident in rank (Hubbard 2013:29, 2016:155). Where official section organization ordering rank does not exist in their destinations, as is the case in virtually all Pohnpeian populations in the U.S., Pohnpeian groups still emerge and coalesce, enacting the underlying principles of community, but in different manifestations as compared to sections. Despite generally resulting in regional or situationally arising groups rather than durable, cohesive, communities typically found in sections, these different manifestations reveal structural similarities to sections.

### **Accommodating Preexisting Ways of Being to New Situations**

Just as people tend to rationalize their positions on a given ideological issue by drawing on previously available tropes rather than inventing justifications from whole cloth (Hanson 1989; Petersen 1992), they likewise accommodate preexisting ways of being to new places and contexts. The underlying principles and practices developed in new contexts may bear little or no correspondence to their origins in terms of their duration and adaptation, but the connection is there, and can be made clear through studies such as this one. Chapter One details this concept, conceived of as spandrels (Gould & Lewontin 1979). This principle's present use follows Petersen's (2009:50) application in Micronesian communities, particularly in Pohnpeian groups.

Petersen (2009:50) focused on the importance of matriliney in structuring Micronesian communities with Pohnpeian groups ranking among his most detailed examples. In this usage, Petersen notes that matrilineal clanship developed as a trait to support inter-island Micronesian groups but it ultimately served as a way to structure localized communities on each island as well. I assert that Pohnpeian chieftainship evolved as a particular elaboration of this trait, developing adaptive characteristics itself. The constellation of factors which have come to underlie Pohnpeian chieftainship is leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles, a

durable and flexible spandrel. Its durability and flexibility are evident historically as Pohnpeian chieftainship has incorporated both religion and government imported from and imposed by Westerners, primarily Americans.<sup>37</sup>

The interrelated Pohnpeian concepts noted above, particularly the leadership-family-place-production-chieftdom-titles linkage typically found in sections, emerged in a different context—one more similar to Pohrasapw. The principles and practices embodied in this constellation of factors are redeployed in Kolonia, Cincinnati, Kansas City, and to some extent in the U.S.-Madolenihmw section. Their creative applications of preexisting traditions and practices follows Hanson's (1989) concept of the inventiveness of tradition, Petersen's (1992) off-the-shelf tradition, and Sahlins's observations on the “permutation of older forms and relationships, made appropriate to novel situations” (Sahlins 1999:408-409). Sign-substitutions occur in the process as people act in new contexts and accommodate their behavior and practices to preexisting principles and norms, engaging in creative deployment of available cultural techniques, meanings, and rationalizations (Hanson 1989).<sup>38</sup>

These interrelated concepts—spandrels, sign-substitutions, and permutations—fall within the broader scope of a historicized structuralism (Sahlins 1999:412). This orientation emphasizes “the resistance of culture” (Sahlins 1999:412), specifically its readiness for adaptability through both conscious and unconscious application to novel situations. This process occurs regardless of whether change is imposed externally or through apparently agentic action such as “voluntary” migration.<sup>39</sup> This point of view should not be taken to imply preadaptations or determinism, but

---

37 This assertion follows David Hanlon's (1988) discussion of how Pohnpeian custom incorporated the several immigrant groups that came to the island during the period that predated Western contact.

38 Elsewhere (Hubbard 2013, 2016) I have detailed the application of this principle to how cash has come to substitute for produce (*wahnsapw*) as a first-fruits offering to Pohnpeian chiefs when coming from Pohnpeians living in the U.S. The sign changed but what it signifies—tribute to chiefs based on labor extracting value from ecological resources—remains the same.

39 The qualifier “apparently” in the previous sentence connotes the fact that what seems to be free choice is always-

rather, following Petersen (2009:50), extending Gould & Lewontin's (1979) application of spandrels in the biological sense, emphasizing “exaptation,” meaning that a “behavioral trait that evolved to serve one function could prove a handy adaptation for an entirely unanticipated one” (Tattersall 2013:115). Individuals and groups retain agency and creativity within historical contingency, regardless of relative position in the global system. “People act in the world in terms of the social beings they are, and it should not be forgotten that from their quotidian point of view it is the global system that is peripheral, not them” (Sahlins 1999:412). They apply their own principles and “native categories” (Sahlins 1999:412) to the situations they encounter.

In the present case, Pohnpeian chieftainship, specifically chiefdoms in the form of sections, constitutes a further elaboration of the spandrel Petersen (2009:50) identified, one that has taken on adaptive traits of its own. Pohnpeian chieftainship and its underlying principles developed based on Pohnpeian matriliney in a situation which did not contemplate migration between what would become the United States—a place where a quite alien way of being dominates. As Pohnpeian groups form in the U.S., chieftainship itself, along with its underlying principles, then becomes an old form, put to a new use in a different context. Formal section organization in U.S.-based Pohnpeian groups, assignment of titles to migrants, and application of the underlying constellation of factors of leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles to community structure more generally all constitute exaptations. Their adaptive use by Pohnpeians to creatively apply preexisting ways of being, including institutions, principles, and practices, to new contexts, structures and supports the five groups this dissertation has analyzed.

The application of section organization to contexts in the U.S. is the most obvious deployment of an exaptation of a Pohnpeian spandrel or native category. This manifestation is the most obvious because sections are explicitly a part of the Pohnpeian sociopolitical system

---

already biologically, historically, politically, and structurally influenced.

itself. Early deployment of section organization outside Pohnpei, for example, in Guam and Hawai'i, did not endure (Hubbard 2016).<sup>40</sup> The Kansas City section features significant modifications in its deployment as compared to a prototypical Pohnpeian section, and has endured so far, surviving its founding section chief's passing, serving the Pohnpeian Kansas City community in many ways (Hubbard 2016). However, as mentioned in previous chapters, the delocalized U.S.-Madolenihmw section remains marginal, with its attempts at replicating a workable version of section organization thus far not bearing fruit—at least not on a comparable level to sections on Pohnpei or even the Kansas City section. Accordingly, the Kansas City section best exemplifies an exaptation using spandrels, “old forms put to new uses” (Petersen, pers. communication 2016), accommodating Pohnpeians to mainland-U.S. residence.

However, the principles and practices underlying section organization—the prototypical Pohnpeian cohesive community construction—find other manifestations in Pohnpeian U.S. communities. As the previous paragraph implied, section organization acts as a label for the linked principles and practices identified: leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles, entailing group cohesion and participant-membership. The following manifestations of this linkage occur in these other communities not identified or structured and supported by formal section organization but supported by exaptations of the linked factors nonetheless.

These principles and practices structure and support other Pohnpeian communities with various configurations in the U.S. not marked by section organization, with the most-clear example found in the Summit Heights group in Cincinnati. However, leadership in all places Pohnpeians reside in the U.S. exists in the form of seniority within families and other groups,

---

40 Reports indicate that there was not sufficient support for the sections in these groups and they lacked the dense concentration of intermarrying kin groups found in the Kansas City section. Recall that sections embody both the linked principles and practices found in the leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles connection; the groups in Guam and Hawai'i apparently lacked at least a strong family component in the form of large extended kinship groups, and likely place and production as well.



and leaders mobilize families and groups in named places. Pohnpeians in the U.S. generate economic production in conjunction with the places they live, providing tribute to chiefs on Pohnpei via family members also on Pohnpei, or directly to sections to which they belong—despite physical separation from them. The production also provides for mutual support with the group that forms in a given place, manifest in kava markets and fund-raising clubs. Chiefdom membership exists through identity linked to paramount chiefdom and, as noted, to sections to which individuals and families belong. Where individuals do not already have titles, they may receive them from chiefs visiting the U.S. or from chiefs on Pohnpei when migrants visit or return to the island.

On Pohnpei, sections compete against one another, often directly when rendering tribute to the Nahnmwarki, generating or eroding section and section members' prestige. In the U.S., softball tournaments partially substitute for the competition aspect of section feasts, creating an us-versus-them community construction—at least in situational and regional communities. One distinction is that, in the U.S., the results of the competitions in the softball tournaments are more objective and readily available to all members of the various communities, rather than to a few. Further, the results of inter-section competitive feasts are subject in large part to the judgment of the Nahnmwarkis and to the subjective perceptions of the attendees.

With their functions being similar to sections, do these other Pohnpeian cohesive community manifestations and sign-substitutions imply section recognition is simply a label, just giving a name to what is already there? Or is it more like a wrapper, binding the contents more concretely than the simple coincidence of the principles and practices found in other communities? Though it reveals aspects of both, the binding effect of formal section organization should not be discounted. In any event, the extension of section organization and the underlying

principles of Pohnpeian social organization of leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles are applied by Pohnpeians in these new contexts.

### **Pohnpeian Social Organization—Some Generalizations**

Though increasing technological mediations and economic specializations intercede, cohesive communities seem to require existence and subsistence in geographic space. Despite the exceptionally flexible and durable scaffolding provided by Pohnpeian section organization, the U.S.-Madolenihmw section's marginality seems to support this point. The separation from sections evident in the lives of Kolonia, Cincinnati, and non-section Kansas City residents seemingly implies section membership detached from place—here the defining place being the home section. Conversely, the individuals in these situations also live in places detached from sections. However, this apparent disconnect between person and section-as-place belies a strong underlying attachment to place and its particular associated community—recall the scolding I received for using as a Facebook profile picture the image of a place to which I did not belong, and which did not belong to me. People retain strong connections to home sections and the people and places they represent, despite physical separation from them.

Title-holder mobility and section-membership flexibility would likewise appear to imply detachment from place, but actually reflect deep attachment to place. Pohnpeian mobility and flexibility might intuitively lead us to expect these traits would undermine attachment, resulting in marked detachment, but they do not. Though I assert the leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles linkage is necessary for cohesive Pohnpeian community formation generally and section organization specifically, it retains a built-in flexibility. As long as the density of localized participation is sufficient to maintain a strong tie to place, geographically dispersed membership strengthens the group rather than weakens it by diversifying access to resources by

members and establishing additional networks, creating more flexibility still, thus enhancing section/community durability.

Though membership in multiple sections and receiving multiple titles while participating in multiple communities creates more obligations for an individual, it also provides access to more resources and additional networks. At some point, there are diminishing returns, and I do not have information indicating frequent simultaneous membership in more than two sections, though that situation may be more common than I presently realize. The upshot is that allowing for at least dual section membership enhances options for the individual and strengthens the chieftainship system overall by allowing for individual needs to be met while remaining part of the system. As people move around Pohnpei, the U.S. Pacific sphere, and the U.S. mainland, historical Pohnpeian mobility has accelerated and its extent expanded exponentially. Rather than creating frequent conflict and confusion, this supercharged mobility has enhanced flexibility and community durability through greater democratization of access to resources. Such seems to be the case in its manifestations on Pohnpei, at least in Kolonia.

Whether on Pohnpei or in the U.S., Pohnpeians organize themselves in localized groups, with rank structuring interactions and relationships, enhancing their ability to order activity for mutual benefit and, often, resource redistribution. Some people explicitly leave Pohnpei to escape the burdens of section participation but carry with them obligations of their own titles or those of family members as family commitments are virtually inescapable for Pohnpeians. Does this repetition of group organization in the U.S. with its general absence of section recognition versus Pohnpei, which is generally marked by sections, indicate we are dealing with things with all their properties in common simply called by different names? For example, kava markets and mutual support clubs in Cincinnati and non-section Kansas City, and sections in Pohrasapw,

Kolonia, and Kansas City each feature mutual support and economic redistribution with order structured by rank. Is this just a sort of old wine in new bottles? Or, as I have suggested, is the combination of linked factors, including section organization, “a difference which makes a difference” (Bateson 2000:457-459)?

The underlying principles and practices—albeit often-modified—of Pohnpeian community organization remain the same whether on Pohnpei or in the U.S. This observation seems especially true of cohesive Pohnpeian groups. These principles and practices follow the leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles linkage as communities emerge from individual and group—usually family—pursuit of economic resources. They generally undertake these efforts for basic subsistence, but at least as frequently, for advancement and maintenance of personal and family social position, creating and maintaining family connections, and creating and maintaining flexibility through physical mobility. The networks of family and friends, particularly dyadic connections that grow with time and use creating more dyadic connections, lead to intergroup linkages and eventually to formation and maintenance of communities. Such connections are specifically identifiable in places like Cincinnati and Kansas City but are lost to history in Pohrasapw. Regardless, sometimes cohesive groups emerge in specific places, whether in Pohrasapw, Cincinnati, or Kansas City. Otherwise, Pohnpeians remain tied to communities in Pohnpei—usually home sections—while deriving aspects of the leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles, particularly economic production and support, from regional resource bases and situational support groups in Kolonia and the U.S.

This process reflects a community's dependence on economic resources available through the place in which its members exist and subsist. Regardless of place, these Pohnpeian communities are nested in context of geopolitical relations, especially nation-states and their

treaties, and particularly the Compact. They also arise within the global economy in its general and specific functions and manifestations, and local ramifications for the Pohnpeian prestige economy.

The local, regional, and global effects of these factors come with wide-ranging and pervasive implications—including facilitating Pohnpeian movement to distant locales featuring very different contexts for individual, family, group, and community life. Within these contexts, Pohnpeians apply longstanding principles and practices to novel situations resulting in new formulations of social structure reflecting the old—e.g., kava markets and fund-raising clubs, paramount chiefdom titles conferred within local groups, softball tournaments—or novel adaptations of existing institutions to the new context, such as sections, titles, sections feasts. The spandrels (Petersen 2009) generated by Pohnpeian community organization pervading lived experience which rise to the level of unconscious thought, habitual behavior, and taken-for-granted reality, redeploy in new and varied contexts resulting in exaptations—application of such aspects to novel situations.

This dissertation compares four localized populations of Pohnpeians, with reference to a fifth, delocalized, group, using a base case in Pohrasapw and an intermediary situation in Kolonia to help establish these underlying principles as they are on Pohnpei. This process allows for further identification of the leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles constellation of factors in the other groups. Though residential flexibility exists in all five units, it is particularly clear in three residentially flexible situations of Pohnpeian populations in the U.S. mainland. Cincinnati uniquely reflects flexibility with regard to title assignment by a paramount chief in an emergent cohesive community in Summit Heights, but it lacks the section structure, identification as a Pohnpeian place, and dense family residence. The Madolenihmw section in the

U.S. comes with section organization and titles but lacks place status—both with reference to Pohnpei and frequent localized activity, particularly by a core family group. Kansas City is an officially organized and recognized section with a section chief presiding over a population comprised principally of intermarrying families. He awards titles tied to the Pohnpeian place the section itself marks—made real by the Kitti paramount chief's recognition of the group and their place, as well as the group's cohesion.

However, considerable resistance to, and criticism of, section organization in the U.S. exists among Pohnpeians both on Pohnpei and in the U.S. Pohnpeians often cite escaping the burdens of section membership as a primary reason for leaving Pohnpei. Yet, I see them retaining many of the obligations they would have had anyway. Their lack of direct section participation may also open them to unregulated demands. Despite their preference for this arrangement, those receiving titles in the Cincinnati Summit Heights area directly from the Sokehs paramount chief expose them directly to his demands, infrequent though they may be. Further, as observed in Summit Heights, Pohnpeians there do manage to reflect many aspects of Pohnpeian cohesive groups, even without section organization, though this group's temporal durability is unclear.

Vibrant, redistributive communities based in varying degrees on family, infused by titles granted by chiefs with local family ties, exist in both Summit Heights and in the Kansas City section. However, I see formal section organization and place status as differences which make a difference. Section organization brings a difference in place status, place prestige, and community cohesion and solidarity, including formal participant-membership identity. Ultimately, these factors lead to enhanced mutual support—both within the community and without. The local section chief's control of titles binds the Kansas City section—especially his family, but also extended family, intermarrying kin groups, and other participating families—as a

cohesive unit. Section organization and family-controlled title assignment connects a community in a way that the Cincinnati Summit Heights version does not, even with its own variation of localized title assignment.

Said another way—Cincinnati's Summit Heights adaptations and configurations reflect some outward appearances of Kansas City's transplant, but do not quite yield the same fruit. The particular manifestation of the leadership-family-place-production-chiefdom-titles linkage found in Kansas City more closely resembles that found on Pohnpei than any other place not on Pohnpei itself, in some ways closely resembling Pohrasapw. This result comes with and through dense kin residence and section organization, and all that those aspects imply, with these characteristics being keys to the difference.

Romer's rule states that, “innovations [which] evolve to maintain the system can change that system,” (Kottak 1999:33-34). This research into the adaptation of Pohnpeian principles, practices, institutions, and community organization to novel situations sets the stage for future exploration of how those very same principles, practices, institutions, and communities might come to change the Pohnpeian system. In other words, what comes next? Is the Kansas City section the future of U.S.-based Pohnpeian communities, particularly if they come to feature denser kin residence patterns? Or is something like Summit Heights and the Sokehs Nahnmwarki's localized innovation with paramount chiefdom level titles a workable model? Will these groups co-exist and compete with one another? Will each move in different directions? Will pressures from the home island cause changes to one or both—or vice versa? For example, the Kansas City section could have its effective charter revoked at any time by the Kittih Nahnmwarki. The Sokehs Nahnmwarki could experience pressures from within his paramount chiefdom or from other chiefdoms to modify or cease his practices. Lacking place- and section-

specific titles, will migrating Summit Heights residents holding these Sokehs titles continue to support and represent Summit Heights as many migrating Kansas City section members do? Further, one or both could weaken or otherwise modify practices on Pohnpei itself. For example, section members on Pohnpei could curtail feast participation and only join a few per year as the Kansas City section members do, or eschew section participation entirely as with the Summit Heights group and hold out for less-demanding, more-prestigious paramount chiefdom titles. While both of those eventualities seem unlikely given the rigor of chieftainship on Pohnpei, they are models available for discussion over nightly kava-drinking sessions.

As it stands, the Kansas City section—despite its variations—remains a closer application of the Pohnpeian principles of group cohesion, social solidarity, and mutual support and tradition, and is marked by section organization as a Pohnpeian place. Summit Heights, however, seems more adapted to the U.S. situation and pervasive Pohnpeian migrant attitudes about escaping direct section responsibilities and chiefly influence. But, as I have noted, they retain indirect responsibilities—at least for now—and I have suggested that the Kansas City section, in a way, limits members' exposure to such indirect demands. Will generations of future Pohnpeians born in the U.S. distance them further from such obligations? Or will Pohnpeian mobility, facilitated by global capitalism and the Compact, and the revised prestige economy, keep families split by the Pacific Ocean, but connected by family relationships, chiefdom participation, native-member identity, group membership, technology (e.g. Facebook/Facetime), and air travel? Of course, there is no way to know with certainty, but what is certain is this: Pohnpeian mobility, flexibility, and innovation will continue to combine with their ever-changing situations to create novel exaptations deploying longstanding cultural principles, practices, and institutions, ones that have served them well throughout their history.



### ***Appendix A—Selected Historical and Current Chiefdom Information***

This information is derived from three primary sources, as noted in each table. The first is an adapted reproduction of the information reported by Saul Riesenberg's (1968) *The Native Polity of Ponape*. The second, where applicable, is taken from a government-produced document to be used in the Pohnpeian education system dated 2006. I obtained this document from Alexander William, section chief of Pohs on August 11, 2014. The third source is Antonio Minoske, a high-ranking member of the Pohrasapw section and retired government employee. During his tenure in this position, he traveled the island extensively and random checks on his information performed by me indicate it is reliable.

The first table compares information regarding the Nahnmwarki and Nahnken lines of titles in the Kittu paramount chiefdom obtained by Riesenberg (1968:11-13) with similar information provided to me by Antonio Minoske. The next table, which spans two pages summarizes the data reported in Riesenberg (1968:25) for the Kittu section and section chiefs. Likewise the two pages which follow the 1968 data summarize similar information dated 2006 which I obtained from Alexander William in 2014. This table includes the historical name of each section, along with the then-current name of the section, section chief, and executive chief.<sup>41</sup> The next table summarizes the information obtained from Antonio Minoske for the extant sections and sitting section chiefs and executive chiefs in 2014. The final table lists the data on sections and section chiefs in a side-by-side comparison.

---

41 Though it is not reproduced here, interested readers may contact me for information on historical section names, as well as section names and section and executive chief titles as of 2006, also retrieved from the information provided by Alexander William.

## Wehi en Kitti (Kitti Paramount Chieftdom)

### Ohlihso (Nahnmaurki Line)

### Serihso (Nahnken Line)

Lapalap (Rank)	Lengileng (Title) Circa 1968*	Lengileng (Title) Circa 2014**	Sou (Matrilineal Clan) Circa 2014**	Lapalap (Rank)	Lengileng (Title) Circa 1968*, ^*	Lengileng (Title) Circa 2014**	Sou (Matrilineal Clan) Circa 2014**
1	Nahnmaurki	Nahnmaurki / Soukisengleng	Dipwenmen***	1	Nahnken	Nahnken Kitti	Dipwenpehpe
2	Wasai	Wasai Kitti		2	Nahlaimw	Nahn Madau Idehd Kitti	Sounpwok
3	Dauk	Dauk Kitti		3	Nahnsau Ririn	Nanapas Kitti	Liptahn
4	Noahs	Noahs Kitti		4	Nahmadaun Idehd	Nahlik Lapalap Kitti	Dipwenpehpe
5	Nahnawa	Nahnawa en Kitti		5	Nahnnapas	Nahn Sou Ririn Kitti	Lasialap
6	Nahnpei	Nahnpei Kitti		6	Souwel Lapalap	Sausehd Lapalap Kitti	Liptahn
7	Nahlik Lapalap^^	Nahn Kiroun Pohndake^**		7	Isohlap	Ouririn Kitti	Dipwenpehpe
8	Nahn Kiroun Pohn Dake^	Nanihd Lapalap		8	Lepen Ririn	Kanikin Ririn Kitti	Dipwenpahnmei
9	Nahnid Lapalap	Lomwei Lapalap Kitti		9	Ou Ririn	Souwel en Dolen Kitti	Liptahn
10	Soudel^^^^	Soudel Kitti		10	Kaniki Ririn	Nahnku Kitti	Dipwenpehpe
11	Oundolen Ririn^^^^	Mwarkietik Kitti		11	Nahn Pohndei	Nahn Pohn Pein Kitti	Dipwenpehpe
12	Lempwei Lapalap^^^	Kalap Kitti		12	Oundol	Oundol en Kitti	
13	Kulap*^			13	Soulikin Dol	Oun Pohn Pein Kitti	
14	Nahn Pohndei*^^			14	Nahntu		
15	Oun Pohndei*^^^			15	Mwarekehtik	Nahn Soun en Wei	
16	Oundol*^^^^			16	Soulikin Sapwas		

\*This list is based on Riesenberg (1968:11).

\*\*Antonio Minoske graciously provided this information.

\*\*\*Presumably all of these title holders are members of this clan.

^Listed as 8, 7, and 8 by Riesenberg's informants.

^^Listed as 7, 8, and 7 by Riesenberg's informants.

^^^Listed as 14, 11, and unlisted by Riesenberg's informants.

^^^^Listed as 13, 10, and 10 by Riesenberg's informants.

^^^^^Listed as 11, unlisted, and 11 by Riesenberg's informants.

\*^Listed as 15, unlisted, and unlisted by Riesenberg's informants.

\*^^Listed as 10, unlisted, and unlisted by Riesenberg's informants.

\*^^^Listed as 10, unlisted, and unlisted by Riesenberg's informants.

\*^^^Listed as 10, unlisted, and unlisted by Riesenberg's informants.

\*^^^^Listed as 12, unlisted, and 12 by Riesenberg's informants.

\*^^^^^Unlisted, 12, and unlisted by Riesenberg's informants.

^^Similar to Riesenberg's informants for the Nahnmaurki line, informants do not agree on most of these orders. However, ranks 1, 2, and 3 were reported without variation. I have ordered these according to their highest average rank.

^^\*It may be that Nahlik Lapalap was inadvertently omitted from this list as there is otherwise marked convergence between the Riesenberg list and this one. However, Antonio Minoske explicitly lists Nahlik Lapalap as now the fourth-ranked member of the Nahnken line.

\*\*Antonio Minoske is a high-ranking member of the Pohrasapw section and retired government employee. During his tenure in this position, he traveled the island extensively and random checks on his information indicate it is reliable.

**Kousapw en Wehi en Kitti**  
**(Sections of the Kitti Paramount Chieftdom)**

fka Onohnloang, Kapihlahng – 1968 Information

Lopidi (Division)	Sub	Kousapw (Section Number)	Ahd Rahnwet (Current Name) – 1968	Soumas (Section Chief)	Peliendahl (Executive Chief)
1-13 = Wene		1	Rohi	Souwen en Rohi	
		3	Mwudok	Soulik en Mwudok	
		2	Rehtu	Nahnkrou en Rehtu	
		4	Sounkiroun	Soulik en Pelehdi	
		5	Olepel	Lepenmadau Olepel	
		6	Pohrasapw	Ounwene en Pohrasapw	
		10	Nanpahlap	Soulik en Pahlap	
		11	Pahnais	Nahmadau en Kepinne	
		9	Kepinne	Soulik en Kepinne	
		8	Pohsein	Nahnkroun Pohsein	
		7	Ohnonmwakot	Nahnawahn Ononmwakot	
		12	Pehs	Oun Rolong	
14-19 = Lukoap		14	Semwei	Karohm en Semwei	
		13	Mwakot	Soulik en Mwakot	
		15	Enipeinpowe	Soulik en Semwei	
		16	Enipeinpah	Kiroulikiak	Serihnei
		17	Pwohk	Souwen en Pwohk	
		18	Kipar	Kanikin Kipar	
20-34 =		20	Pweipwei	Riting en Pweipwei	
Kepihleng/		19	Rohnkitti	Krou en Wein	
Kitti Proper		22	Mahnd	Kasa	

**Kousapw en Wehi en Kitti**  
**(Sections of the Kitti Paramount Chieftdom)**

fka Onohnloang, Kapihlahng – 1968 Information (Continued)

Lopidi (Division)	Sub	Kousapw (Section Number)	Ahd Rahnwet (Current Name) – 1968	Soumas (Section Chief)	Peliendahl (Executive Chief)
		21	Salapwuk	Saum	
		23	Wenik	Lepen Wenik	
		24	Lauatik	Sihpwen Lauatik	
		25	Oare	Soulik en Kepinne	
		26	Diadi	Nahmadaun Diadi	
		27	Poatoapoat	Kaniki en Akahk	
		28	Alauso	Nahnsahu en lleu	
		29	Sewihso	Nahnsahu en Sewihso	
		30	Seinwar	Soulik en Seinwar	
		31	Paliapailong	Nahmadau en Paliapailong	
		32	Marahu	Soulik en Marahu	
		33	Tomworoahlong	Soulik en Lohd	
		34	Pwudoi	Luwen en Pwudoi	
35-37 =		35	Pehlong	Nahmadau en Pehleng	
Lehnpwel		36	Dien	Nahnsahused en Pehleng	
		37	Paies	Soukoahng en Paies	



**Kousapw en Wehi en Kitti**  
**(Sections of the Kitti Paramount Chiefdom)**

fka Onohnloang, Kapihlahng – 2006 Information

Lopidi (Division)	Sub	Kousapw (Section Number)	Eden Mahs (Name in the Past) – Per 2006 Information	Ahd Rahnwet (Current Name) – Circa 2006	Soumas (Section Chief)	Peliendahl (Executive Chief)
I	1	1	Peilehle (Peinlele)	Rohi	Souwen en Rohi / Soulik en Dihdip	Soumedehn Rohi
		2	Soulap	Rehtu	Nahnkiroun Rentu	Soulik en Rehtu
		3	Dolen Oair / Komwontakaitoal	Mwudok	Soulik en Mwudok	Nahnsou Walahlong
		4	Pohntoa / Poalehdi	Sounkiroun	Soulik en Poalehdi	Kanikin Sounkiroun
I	2	5	Alpowe	Oloapaol	Lepen Medehn Oloapaol	Kanikin Alopowe
		6	Weias	Nanpahlap	Soulik en Pahlap	Soauwen en Pahlap
		7	Moaloahluhk	Pahnais	Luwen en Moaloaluhk	Kanikin Ais
		8	Rioahk	Kepinne	Soulik en Kepinne	Luwoan en Rioahk
		9	Utuhnroahlong	Pohsoain	Soulik en Pohsoain	Kanikin Kioar
		10	Paipenloang	Pohrasapw	Soulik en Pohrasapw	Kanikihnloang
		11	Ononsoamwoai	Ononmwakoat	Souwen en Ononmwoakot	Nahnawa en Ononmwoakot
		12	Nanroahlong	Poahs	Lepen Roahlong	Oaunroahlong
		13	Pwosoulap	Soamwoai	Koaroahmen Soamwoai	Sapededn Pwosoulap
		14	Paledak	Mwoakot	Souliken Mwoakot	Nahnkiroun Palehdak
II	3	15	Pwosoutik	Enipein Powe	Souliken Soamwoai	Sahpwoasoa
		16	Nanpohnmal	Enipein Pah	Kiroulikiak Enipein	Serihnei Pohnmal
II	4	17	Sapwen Moatoahtoai	Pwok	Souwen en Pwok	Kiroun en Pwok
		18	Pohnkati	Poail	Kiroun en Poail	Nahmedehn Kati
		19	Pohnalam Wahu	Kipar	Soumwahng	Nahmedehn Kipar
		20	Naniloal	Pwoaipwoai	Soudepe	Ritingen Pwoaipwoai
		21	Pelien Likahdahd	Rohnkitti	Kiroueniwen	Oaunmalewe

**Kousapw en Wehi en Kitti**  
**(Sections of the Kitti Paramount Chiefdom)**

fka Onohnloang, Kapihlahng – 2006 Information (Continued)

Lopidi (Division)	Sub	Kousapw (Section Number)	Eden Mahs (Name in the Past) – Per 2006 Information	Ahd Rahnwet (Current Name) – Circa 2006	Soumas (Section Chief)	Peliendahl (Executive Chief)
		22	Mant	Mand	Kasa	Kiroumand
		23	Mwasangapw	Salapwuk	Sihpw en Mwasangap	Riting en Takain Sem
III	5	24	Paluhp	Wenik	Souliken Wenik	Lepen Wenik
		25	Pahnmwok en And	Lewetik	Sihpw en Lweetik	Soulik en Pahnmwek
		26	Rongoapwung	Oare	Nahnsou Oare	Souwen en Oare
		27	Dolen Samaki	Diadi	Nahnmedehn Diadi	Soulik en Dol
		28	Nankoapkoap	Poalwi / Poatoapoot	Kanikin Akahk	Nahnkiroun Poatoapoot
		29	Ileunsed / Nanpeiloal	Alauso	Lepennos	Nahnsou en Ileu
		30	Peinpwok	Soawishso	Nahnsou Soawihso	Nansousedin Pwok
		31	Moaroai	Seinwar	Souliken Seinwar	Nahnkiroun Moaroai
		32	Lepiso	Paliapailong	Soulik en Wahu	Nahnwawahn Paliapailong
		33	Madol	Marahu	Souliken Marahu	Soumedehn Madol
III	6	34	Pahndil	Toamwoaroahlong	Souliken Lohd	Kanikin Toamwoaroahlong
		35	Pohnaul	Pwudoi	Luwenin Pwudoi	Nahnkiroun Aul
		36	Nanwelin Pehleng	Nanrohi	Souliken Nanrohi	Soumedehn Nanrohi (or Soumakahn Nanroi)
		37	Lehnpwel	Pehleng	Nahmedehn Pehleng	Sapeden Lehnpwel
		38	Mwoakot	Dien	Soukiore	Kanikin Mwoakot
		39	Dolen Mwoakorokot / Aulen Keseikwar	Paies	Soangko Paies	Kanikin Dolen Dien
		40	Kepira	Tomwara	Souliken Towara	Kanikin Kepira
		41	Nanmadap	Nanmadap	Souliken Tomwara	Nahliken Akoaloang

**Kousapw en Wehi en Kitti**  
**(Sections of the Kitti Paramount Chiefdom)**

fka Onohnloang, Kapihlahng – 2014 Information

Lopidi (Division)	Sub	Kousapw (Section Number)	Ahd Rahnwet (Current Name) – 2014	Soumas (Section Chief)	Peliendahl (Executive Chief)
I	1	1	Rohi	Soulik Dihdip	Soumadau en Rohi
		2	Mwudok	Soulik en Mwudok	Nansousehd en Mwudok
		3	Rehtu	Soulik en Rehtu	Souwen en Rehtu
		4	Sounkiroun	Soulik en Pelehdi	Souwen en Pelehdi
I	2	5	Ohlapel	Lepenmeden Ohloapoal	Kanikin Ohloapoal
		6	Pohrasapw	Soulik en Pohrasapw	Souwen en Pohrasapw
		7	Pahlap	Soulik en Pahlap	Souwen en Pahlap
		8	Pahnais	Luwen en Molauluhk	Kanikin Molauluhk
		9	Kepine	Soulik en Kepine	Luwen en Kepine
		10	Pohsoain	Nan Kiroun Pohsoain	Koaroam Pohsoain
		11	Ohnon Mwokot	Souwen en Ohnon en Mwokot	Nanawa en Ohnon Mwokot
		12	Pohs	Lepen Roahleng	Oau Roahleng
		13	Semwei	Koaroam en Semwei	Sapwad en Semwei
		14	Mwokoat	Soulik en Mwokoat	Soulik en Palehdak
		15	Pohnleng en Kansas	Soumaka en Pohnleng	Ounken
		16	Mwudok en Semwei	(Unknown)	(Unknown)
II	3	1	Enipein Powe	Soulik en Semwei	Sau Pwosoa
		2	Enipein Pah	Kirou Likiahk	Serihnoi
II	4	3	Pwoak	Kiroun en Pwoak	Souwen en Pwoak
		4	Poail	Kiroun en Poail	Nankiroun Poail
		5	Kipar	Sou Mwahng	Nanmadau en Kipar



**Kousapw en Wehi en Kitti**  
**(Sections of the Kitti Paramount Chiefdom)**

fka Onohnloang, Kapihlahng – 2014 Information (Continued)

Lopidi (Division)	Sub	Kousapw (Section Number)	Ahd Rahnwet (Current Name) – 2014	Soumas (Section Chief)	Peliendahl (Executive Chief)
		6	Pwoipwoi	Soudepe Pwoipwoi	Riting en Pwoipwoi
		7	Rohn Kitti	Nahnawahn Rohn Kitti	Kiroun Rohn Kitti
		8	Nan Mahnd	Kasa en Mahnd	Kiroun en Mahnd
		9	Salapwuk	Soulik en Semwei Salapwuk	Sihpw en Mnasangahpw
III	5	1	Wenik	Soulik en Wenik	Lepen Wenik
		2	Loawotik	Sihpw en Lowotik	Soumadau en Pahnmas
		3	Ore	Nahnsou Ore	Soumadau en Ore
		4	Diadi	Dahnmadohn Diodi	Nahn Kirou Ore
		5	Poatopaat	Kanikin Akahk	Soumadauohn Akahk
		6	Alauso	Leprauoas	Nahnawa Ileu
		7	Sowiso	Nahnsou Sowiso	Nahnsehd Pwok
		8	Sapwtakai	(Unknown)	(Unknown)
		9	Seinwar	Soulik en Seinwar	Nahn Kirou Marot
		10	Paliapailong	Soulik en Wahu	(Unknown)
		11	Marahu	Soulik en Marahu	Souwen en Marahu
III	6	12	Tomarohlong	Soulik en Lohd	Kaniken Tomarohlong
		13	Pwudoi	Nahnkiroun en Pwudoi	Luwen en Pwudoi
		14	Nan Wel en Pohlong	Soulik en Nan Rohi	(Unknown)
		15	Pohlong	Nahn Madau en Pohleng	Sapwad en Pohlong
		16	Dien	Soulik en Dien	Soumadau Rohi
		17	Tomara Kitti	Soulik en Tomara Kitti	Kaniken Kepine
		18	Paies	Soukom Paies	Kaniken Dolen Dien
		19	Nan Madapw	Riting en Koter	Nahlik en Akoloap



**Kousapw oh Soumas en Wehi en Kitti**  
**(Sections and Section Chiefs of the Kitti Paramount Chieftdom)**

fka Onohnloang, Kapihlahng

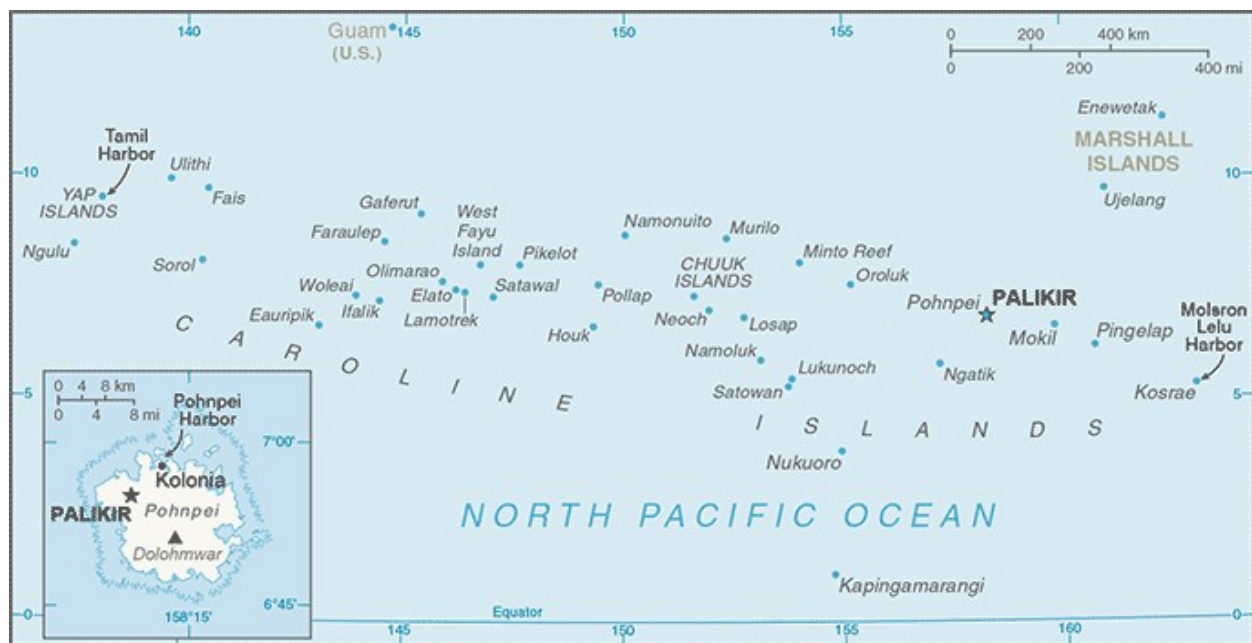
Kousapw (Section Number)	Eden Mahs (Name in the Past) – Per 2006 Information	1968 – Ahd en Kousapw (Section Name)	2006 – Ahd en Kousapw (Section Name)	2014 – Ahd en Kousapw (Section Name)	1968 – Soumas (Section Chief)	2006 – Soumas (Section Chief)	2014 – Soumas (Section Chief)
1	Peilehle (Peinlele)	Rohi	Rohi	Rohi	Souwen en Rohi	Souwen en Rohi / Soulik en Dihdip	Soulik Dihdip
2	Soulap	Mwudok	Rehtu	Rehtu	Soulik en Mwudok	Nahnkiroun Rentu	Soulik en Rehtu
3	Dolen Oair / Komwontakaitoal	Rehtu	Mwudok	Mwudok	Nahnkrou en Rehtu	Soulik en Mwudok	Soulik en Mwudok
4	Pohntoa / Poalehdi	Sounkiroun	Sounkiroun	Sounkiroun	Soulik en Pelehdi	Soulik en Poalehdi	Soulik en Pelehdi
5	Alpowe	Olepel	Oloapaol	Ohlapel	Lepenmadau Olepel	Lepen Medehn Oloapaol	Lepenmeden Ohloapaol
6	Weias	Pohrasapw	Nanpahlap	Pahlap	Ounwene en Pohrasapw	Soulik en Pahlap	Soulik en Pahlap
7	Moaloahluhk	Nanpahlap	Pahnais	Pahnais	Soulik en Pahlap	Luwen en Moaloaluhk	Luwen en Molauluhk
8	Rioahk	Pahnais	Kepinne	Kepine	Nahnmadau en Kepinne	Soulik en Kepinne	Soulik en Kepine
9	Utuhnroahlong	Kepinne	Pohsoain	Pohsoain	Soulik en Kepinne	Soulik en Pohsoain	Nan Kiroun Pohsoain
10	Paipenloang	Pohsein	Pohrasapw	Pohrasapw	Nahnkroun Pohsein	Soulik en Pohrasapw	Soulik en Pohrasapw
11	Ononsoamwoai	Ohnonmwakot	Ononmwakoat	Ohnon Mwokot	Nahnawahn Ononmwakot	Souwen en Ononmwoakot	Souwen en Ohnon en Mwokot
12	Nanroahlong	Pehs	Poahs	Pohs	Oun Rolong	Lepen Roahlong	Lepen Roahleng
13	Pwosoulap	Semwei	Soamwoai	Semwei	Karohm en Semwei	Koaroahmen Soamwoai	Koaroam en Semwei
14	Paledak	Mwakot	Mwoakot	Mwokoat	Soulik en Mwakot	Souliken Mwoakot	Soulik en Mwokoat
42				Pohnleng en Kansas			Soumaka en Pohnleng
43				Mwudok en Semwei			(Unknown)
15	Pwosoutik	Enipeinpowe	Enipein Powe	Enipein Powe	Soulik en Semwei	Souliken Soamwoai	Soulik en Semwei
16	Nanpohnmal	Enipeinpah	Enipein Pah	Enipein Pah	Kiroulikiak	Kiroulikiak Enipein	Kirou Likiahk
17	Sapwen Moatoahtoi	Pwohk	Pwok	Pwoak	Souwen en Pwohk	Souwen en Pwok	Kiroun en Pwoak
18	Pohnkati		Poail	Poail		Kiroun en Poail	Kiroun en Poail
19	Pohnalam Wahu	Kipar	Kipar	Kipar	Kanikin Kipar	Soumwahng	Sou Mwhang
20	Naniloal	Pweipwei	Pwoaipwoai	Pwoipwoi	Riting en Pweipwei	Soudepe	Soudepe Pwoipwoi

**Kousapw oh Soumas en Wehi en Kitti**  
**(Sections and Section Chiefs of the Kitti Paramount Chieftdom) – Continued**

fka Onohnloang, Kapihlahng

Kousapw (Section Number)	Eden Mahs (Name in the Past) – Per 2006 Information	1968 – Ahd en Kousapw (Section Name)	2006 – Ahd en Kousapw (Section Name)	2014 – Ahd en Kousapw (Section Name)	1968 – Soumas (Section Chief)	2006 – Soumas (Section Chief)	2014 – Soumas (Section Chief)
21	Pelien Likahdahd	Rohnkitti	Rohnkitti	Rohn Kitti	Krou en Wein	Kiroueniwen	Nahnawahn Rohn Kitti
22	Mant	Mahnd	Mand	Nan Mahnd	Kasa	Kasa	Kasa en Mahnd
23	Mwasangapw	Salapwuk	Salapwuk	Salapwuk	Saum	Sihpw en Mwasangap	Soulik en Semwei Salapwuk
24	Paluhp	Wenik	Wenik	Wenik	Lepen Wenik	Souliken Wenik	Soulik en Wenik
25	Pahnmwok en And	Lauatik	Lewetik	Loawotik	Sihpwen Lauatik	Sihpw en Lweetik	Sihpw en Lowotik
26	Rongoapwung	Oare	Oare	Ore	Soulik en Kepinne	Nahnsou Oare	Nahnsou Ore
27	Dolen Samaki	Diadi	Diadi	Diadi	Nahmadaun Diadi	Nahnmedehn Diadi	Dahnmadohn Diodi
28	Nankoapkoap	Poatoapoat	Poalwi / Poatoapoat	Poatopoat	Kaniki en Akahk	Kanikin Akahk	Kanikin Akahk
29	Ileunsed / Nanpeiloal	Alauso	Alauso	Alauso	Nahnsahu en Ileu	Lepenno	Leprauoas
30	Peinpwok	Sewihso	Soawishso	Sowiso	Nahnsahu en Sewihso	Nahnsou Soawihso	Nahnsou Sowiso
44				Sapwtakai			(Unknown)
31	Moaroai	Seinwar	Seinwar	Seinwar	Soulik en Seinwar	Souliken Seinwar	Soulik en Seinwar
32	Lepiso	Paliapailong	Paliapailong	Paliapailong	Nahmadau en Paliapailong	Soulik en Wahu	Soulik en Wahu
33	Madol	Marahu	Marahu	Marahu	Soulik en Marahu	Souliken Marahu	Soulik en Marahu
34	Pahndil	Tomworoahlong	Toamwoaroahlong	Tomarohlong	Soulik en Lohd	Souliken Lohd	Soulik en Lohd
35	Pohnaul	Pwudoi	Pwudoi	Pwudoi	Luwen en Pwudoi	Luwenin Pwudoi	Nahnkiroun en Pwudoi
36	Nanwelin Pehleng		Nanrohi	Nan Wel en Pohlong		Souliken Nanrohi	Soulik en Nan Rohi
37	Lehnpwel	Pehlong	Pehleng	Pohlong	Nahmadau en Pehleng	Nahmedehn Pehleng	Nahn Madau en Pohlong
38	Mwoakot	Dien	Dien	Dien	Nahnsahused en Pehleng	Soukiore	Soulik en Dien
39	Dolen Mwoakorokot / Aulen Keseikwar	Paies	Paies	Paies	Soukoahng en Paies	Soangko Paies	Soukom Paies
40	Kepira		Tomwara	Tomara Kitti		Souliken Towara	Soulik en Tomara Kitti
41	Nanmadap		Nanmadap	Nan Madapw		Souliken Tomwara	Riting en Koter

## Maps

Pohnpei Map<sup>42</sup>FSM Map<sup>43</sup>

<sup>42</sup> [http://www.visit-micronesia.fm/state/p\\_fun.html](http://www.visit-micronesia.fm/state/p_fun.html)

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.cia.gov/Library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/fm.html>

## ***Bibliography***

- Adams, Robert, Jr.  
2006 Islands of History: Local Events and Global Connections. *Transforming Anthropology* 14:77-82.
- Appadurai, Arjun  
1990 Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy. *Public Culture* 2(2: Spring 1990):1-24.  
— 1996 *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Ariès, Philippe  
1965 *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*. Oxford: Vintage Books.  
— 1977 The Family and the City. *Daedalus* 106(2: The Family):227-235.
- Ayers, William  
1983 *Archaeology at Nan Madol, Ponape*. University of Oregon.
- Azios, Tony  
2010 Uncle Sam wants Micronesians for US Military. *The Christian science Monitor*, May 5.
- Barrett, Stanley R.  
2010 Community: The Career of a Concept. *Anthropologica* 52(1):113-125.
- Bascom, William R.  
1948 Ponapean Prestige Economy. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 4(2):211-221.
- Bateson, Gregory  
2000 [1972] Form, Substance, and Difference. In *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. Pp. 448-466. New York: Ballantine Books.
- Bernart, Luelen  
1977 *The Book of Luelen*. J.L. Fischer, S.H. Riesenberg, and M.G. Whiting, transl. Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii.
- Bodley, John H.  
2011 *Cultural Anthropology: Tribes, States, and the Global System*. Lanham, Maryland: AltaMira Press.
- Brown, David L.  
2002 Migration and Community: Social networks in a Multilevel World. *Rural Sociology* 67(1):1-23.
- Brown, Donald E.  
1991 *Human Universals*. New York, McGraw-Hill, Inc.
- Cabez, Ancaieto and Valeriano Weyler  
2012 [1895] *Estudios sobre Carolinas. La isla de Ponape. Geografia, etnografia, historia*. British Library.
- Callon, Michel  
1986 Some Elements of a Sociology of Translation: Domestication of the Scallops and Fishermen of St. Brieuc Bay. In *Power, Action, and Belief: A New Sociology of Knowledge?* John Law, ed. Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd.
- Cohen, Anthony P.  
2001 *The Symbolic Construction of Community*. London, Routledge.
- Cushing, Frank Hamilton  
1998 *My Adventures in Zuni*. United States, Filter Press.
- De Genova, Nicholas  
2002 Migrant "Illegality" and Deportability in Everyday Life. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 31(1):419-447.
- Duranti, Allesandro, Elinor Ochs, and Elia K. Ta'ase.  
1995 Change and Tradition in Literacy Instruction in a Samoan American Community. *Educational Foundations* (Fall): 57–74.

- Eggan, Fred  
1954 Social Anthropology and the Method of Controlled Comparison. *American Anthropologist* 56(5):743-763.
- Eve, Michael  
2010 Integrating Via Networks: Foreigners and Others. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 33(7):1231-1248.
- Falgout, Suzanne  
1991 Lessons of War from Pohnpei. In *Remembering the Pacific War*, Occasional Paper 36. Edited by Geoffrey M. White. Center for Pacific Islands Studies, School of Hawaiian, Asian, and Pacific Studies. Honolulu: University of Hawaii at Manoa, pp. 123-132.  
2012 Pohnpeians in Hawai'i: Refashioning Identity in Diaspora. *Pacific Studies* 35(2):184-202.
- Fassin, Didier  
2011 Policing Borders, Producing Boundaries. The Governmentality of Immigration in Dark Times. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 40:213-226.
- Firth, Raymond  
1940 The Analysis of Mana: An Empirical Approach. *The Journal of the Polynesian Society* 49(4):483-510.  
— 1960 Succession to Chieftainship in Tikopia. *Oceania* 30(3):161-180.  
— 1966 *We, The Tikopia: A Sociological Study of Kinship in Primitive Polynesia*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Fox, Stephen  
2000 Communities of Practice, Foucault and Actor-Network Theory. *Journal of Management Studies* 37(6):853-867.
- Friedman, Jonathan  
2000 Globalization, Class and Culture in Global Systems. Theme issue, "Festschrift for Immanuel Wallerstein – Part II: Edited By Giovanni Arrighi & Walter L. Goldfrank. *Journal of World-Systems Research* 6(3):636-657.  
— 2013 *Globalization Theory. Theory in Social and Cultural Anthropology: Volume One*. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- FSM  
2010 Summary Analysis of Key Indicators from the FSM Census of Population and Housing. B. FSM Office of Statistics, Overseas Development Assistance and Compact Management (S.B.O.C.), ed. Palikir, Pohnpei: FSM.
- Garfinkel, Harold  
1974 The Origins of the Term "Ethnomethodology". In *Ethnomethodology; Selected Readings*. R. Turner, ed. Pp. 15-18. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Education.
- Geertz, Clifford  
1973a Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture. In *Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures*, pp. 4-20. New York: Basic Books.  
— 1973b Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight. In *Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures*, pp. 412-53. New York: Basic Books.  
— 1983 From the Native's Point of View. In *Geertz, Local Knowledge*, Chapter 3. New York: Basic Books.
- Glick Schiller, Nina and Noel B. Salazar  
2013 Regimes of Mobility Across the Globe. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 39(2):183-200.
- Goncalves, Bruno, Nicola Perra, and Alessandro Vespignani  
2011 Modeling Users' Activity on Twitter Networks: Validation of Dunbar's Number. *PLoS One* 6(8):1-5
- Goodenough, Ward H.  
1986 Sky World and This World: The Place of Kachaw in Micronesian Cosmology. *American Anthropologist* 88(3):551-568.

- Gorenflo, L.J. and Michael J. Levin  
1992 Regional Demographic Change in Pohnpei State, Federated States of Micronesia. *Pacific Studies* 15(1):1-49.
- Gould, Stephen J. and R.C. Lewontin  
1979 The spandrels of San Marco and the Panglossian paradigm: a critique of the adaptionist programme. *Proc. R. Soc. Lond.* 205:581-598.
- Granovetter, Mark S.  
1973 The Strength of Weak Ties. *American Journal of Sociology* 78(6):1360-1380.  
— 1983 The Strength of Weak Ties Revisited. *Sociological Theory* 1:201-233.
- Hanlon, David  
1988 *Upon a Stone Altar: A History of the Island of Pohnpei to 1890*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.  
— 1994 Patterns of colonial rule in Micronesia. In K. R. Howe, R. C. Kiste, & B. V. Lal (Eds.), *Tides of history* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.  
— 2004 Wone Sohte Lohdi: History and Place on Pohnpei. In *Pacific Places, Pacific Histories: Essays in Honor of Robert C. Kiste*. D. Munro and B.V. Lal, eds. Pp. 195-215. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.  
— 2009 The "Sea of Little Lands": Examining Micronesia's Place in "Our Sea of Islands". Pp. 91-111, Vol. 21: University of Hawaii Press.
- Hanson, Allan  
1972 *Rapan Lifeways: Society and History on a Polynesian Island*. United States: Waveland Press, Inc.  
— 1973 Political Change in Tahiti and Samoa: An Exercise in Experimental Anthropology. *Ethnology* 12(1):1-13.  
— 1982 Method in Semiotic Anthropology; or, How the Maori Latrine Means. In Hanson, ed., *Studies in Symbolism and Cultural Communication*, pp. 74-89. Lawrence: University of Kansas Publications in Anthropology #14.  
— 1989 The Making of the Maori: Culture Invention and Its Logic. *American Anthropologist* 91(4):890-902.  
— 2011 Which Came First, The Doer or the Deed? Unpublished Paper.
- Hess, Jim, Karen L. Nero, and Michael L. Burton  
2001 Creating Options: Forming a Marshallese Community in Orange County, California. *The Contemporary Pacific* 13(1):89-121.
- Hezel, Francis X.  
2001 *The New Shape of Old Island Cultures: A Half Century of Social Change in Micronesia*. United States of America: University of Hawai'i Press.  
— 2005 The Call to Arms: Micronesians in the Military. *Micronesian Counselor* 58:3.  
— 2013 *Making Sense of Micronesia: The Logic of Pacific Island Culture*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Hubbard, Charles A.  
2013 *Beyond the Stone Altar: The "Section Over Heaven of Kansas City" Fusion of a Pohnpeian Chiefdom: A Sociopolitical Basis for Place*. Master's Thesis, Department of Anthropology, University of Kansas.  
— 2016 Place Out of Place: a Pohnpeian Chiefdom in Kansas City. *Oceania* 86(2):151-173.
- HRAF  
2017 Human Relations Area Files: 620 Community, Retrieved December 28, 2017 from <http://hraf.yale.edu/resources/reference/outline-of-cultural-materials/>.
- Inda, Jonathan X. and Renato Rosaldo  
2002 Introduction: A World in Motion. In *The Anthropology of Globalization: A Reader*. Jonathan X. Inda and Renato Rosaldo, eds. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.



- Janes, Craig  
1990 *Migration, Social Change, and Health: A Samoan Community in Urban California*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Kallen, Evelyn  
1982 *The Western Samoan Kinship Bridge: A Study in Migration, Social Change and the New Ethnicity*. Leiden, The Netherlands: E.J. Brill.
- Kihleng, Kimberlee S.  
1996 *Women in Exchange: Negotiated Relations, Practice, and the Constitution of Female Power in Process of Culture Reproduction and Change in Pohnpei, Micronesia*. Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of Anthropology, University of Hawai'i.
- Kirch, Patrick V.  
2002 *On the Road of the Winds: An Archaeological History of the Pacific Islands Before European Contact*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Kottak, Conrad P.  
1999 The New Ecological Anthropology. *American Anthropologist*, New Series 101(1):23-35.
- Kozaitis, Kathryn A.  
2000 The rise of anthropological praxis. *Annals of Anthropological Practice*, 18(1):45-66.
- Latour, Bruno  
1999 On Recalling ANT. In *Actor Network Theory and After*. J. Law and J. Hassard, eds. Pp. 15-25. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Law, John  
1992 Notes on the Theory of the Actor-Network: Ordering, Strategy, and Heterogeneity. *Systems Practice* 5:379-393.
- Littlewood, Roland  
2009 Functionalists and zombies: Sorcery as spandrel and social rescue. *Anthropology & Medicine* 16(3):241-252.
- Lopez, Ann Aurelia  
2007 *The Farmworkers' Journey*. Berkeley, California. University of California.
- Malinowski, Bronislaw  
1922 *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. Oxford. Routledge.
- Marshall, Mac  
1979 *Weekend Warriors: Alcohol in a Micronesian Culture*. Los Angeles, Mayfield Publishing Company.  
— 2004 *Namoluk Beyond the Reef: The Transformation of a Micronesian Community*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Mauricio, Rufino  
1993 *Ideological Bases for Power and Leadership on Pohnpei, Micronesia: Perspectives from Archaeology and Oral History*. Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of Anthropology, University of Oregon.
- Musolesi, Mirco and Cecilia Mascolo  
2006 A Community Based mobility Model for Ad Hoc Network Research. In *Proceedings of the 2nd international workshop on Multi-hop ad hoc networks: from theory to reality*, pp. 31-38.

Petersen, Glenn

- 1979 External Politics, Internal Economics, and Ponapean Social Formation. *American Ethnologist* 6(1):25-40.
- 1982a One Man Cannot Rule a Thousand: Fission in a Ponapean Chiefdom. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.
- 1982b Ponapean Matriliney: Production, Exchange, and the Ties That Bind. *American Ethnologist* 9(1):129-144.
- 1984 The Ponapean Culture of Resistance. *Radical History Review* 28-30:347-366.
- 1985 A Cultural Analysis of the Ponapean Independence Vote in the 1983 Plebiscite. *Pacific Studies* 9(1):13-51.
- 1999 Sociopolitical Rank and Conical Clanship in the Caroline Islands. *The Journal of the Polynesian Society* 108(4):367-410.
- 2006 Micronesia's Breadfruit Revolution and the Evolution of a Culture Area. *Archaeology in Oceania* 41(2):82-92.
- 2007 Hambruch's Colonial Narrative. *The Journal of Pacific History* 42(3):317-330.
- 2009 Traditional Micronesian Societies: Adaptation, Integration, and Political Organization. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Pinker, Steven and Paul Bloom

- 1990 Natural Language and Natural Selection. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 13(4):707-784.

Riesenberg, Saul H.

- 1968 The Native Polity of Ponape, Volume 10. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press.

Roberts, Sam G. B. and Robin I.M. Dunbar

- 2011 Communication in social networks: Effects of kinship, network size, and emotional closeness. *Personal Relationships* 18:439-452.

Rofel, Lisa

- 1999 Other Modernities: Gendered Yearnings in China After Socialism. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Sahlins, Marshall

- 1999 Two or Three Things that I Know about Culture. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 5(3):399-421.

Sassen, Saskia

- 2010 A Savage Sorting of Winners and Losers: Contemporary Versions of Primitive Accumulation. *Globalizations* 7(1):23-50.
- 2013 Migration is Expulsion by Another Name in World of Foreign Land Deals. *The Guardian* (Wednesday 29 May 2013).

Shimizu, Akitoshi

- 1987 Feasting as Socio-Political Process of Chieftainship on Ponape, Eastern Carolines. *Senri Ethnological Studies* 21: 129-176.

Silverman, Martin G.

- 1971 Disconcerting Issue: Meaning and Struggle in a Resettled Pacific Community. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Small, Cathy A.

- 2011 (1997) *Voyages: From Tongan Villages to American Suburbs*. United States of America, Cornell University Press.

Sohl, Damien, R. Andreas, and K. Rehg

- 2017 Pohnpeian-English Online Dictionary. Retrieved December 28, 2017, from <http://www.trussel2.com/PNP/>.

Sole, Ricard V. and Sergi Valverde

- 2006 Are network motifs the spandrels of cellular complexity? *Trends in Ecology and Evolution* 21(8):419-422.



Tattersall, Ian

2013 Stephen J. Gould's intellectual legacy to anthropology. *In* Stephen J. Gould: The Scientific Legacy, pp. 115-127. Springer, Milano.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division

2013a Population Facts, Issue 2.

[http://esa.un.org/unmigration/documents/The\\_number\\_of\\_international\\_migrants.pdf](http://esa.un.org/unmigration/documents/The_number_of_international_migrants.pdf), accessed July 6, 2014.

— 2013b Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2013), Population Facts, Issue 2. [http://esa.un.org/unmigration/documents/The\\_number\\_of\\_international\\_migrants.pdf](http://esa.un.org/unmigration/documents/The_number_of_international_migrants.pdf), accessed July 6, 2014.

Vertovec, Steven

2011 The Cultural Politics of Nation and Migration. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 40:241-256.

Warren, Ronald L.

1956 Toward a Reformulation of Community Theory. *Human Organization* 15(2):8-11.

Young, Frank W.

1999 A Neo-Durkheimian Theory of Small Communities. *European Society for Rural Sociology* 39(1):3-16.